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HEART ECHOES FROM THE EAST.

1877
1878
1879

W. B. Longley

1904.



Grandma with

HEART ECHOES

FROM THE EAST:

OR

SACRED LYRICS AND SONNETS.

BY MARY E. LESLIE,
CALCUTTA.

LONDON:
JAMES NISBET & CO., 21 BERNERS STREET.
MDCCCLXI.

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LYRICS.

“What though around His throne of fire
The everlasting chant
Be wafted from the seraph choir
In glory jubilant ?

Yet stoops He ever pleased to mark
Our rude essays of love,
Faint as the pipe of wakening lark,
Heard by some twilight grove.”

THE CHRISTIAN YEAR.

Lyriqs.

I.

I BRING my one small gift, my Lord and Master,—

No ointment rare and sweet,

Shut in a box of snowy alabaster,

To break o'er Thy dear feet:

No ripe, full wheaten ears with gleaming golden,

In a large, heavy sheaf,

The stalks together beautifully holden

With wreath of flower and leaf:

No basket heaped with fruits of radiant lustre,
O'erspread with soft rich bloom,
Amid green leaves the grape's bright purple cluster,
And delicate perfume:

But from the fields wherein Thy favour loving,
Which ever joys to bless,
Has granted to my feet a free, glad roving,
And blissful happiness,—

Some simple field-flowers have I gladly broken,
Around Thy cross to twine,
Of my heart's love, a slight and fragile token
To Thee, O Saviour, mine !

Smiles not the mother when her young child bringeth
In its white, tiny hand,—
The while its dancing foot with pleasure springeth,
So that it scarce can stand,—

A buttercup or two, or some small daisies

Gathered from grassy place ?

And showers she not her fond and loving praises

On the small upturned face ?

O more than mother dear, than mother tender,

Receive my offering,

And smile upon it, till amid Thy splendour,


Within the angel-ring,

I take the crown Thou givest ; and straight bending

In adoration deep,

Cast it before Thee, while the songs ascending,

The crystal arches sweep.



II.

“We will remember Thy love.” SONG OF SOLOMON I, 4.

THY love, O God and Saviour, will we cherish

More than the fleeting loves of earthly friends;
Theirs fade away and like to spring flowers perish,
Thine changeless is, and lessens not nor ends.

More than the recollection of earth's pleasures

Shall thoughts of Thy great love dwell in our hearts,
There guarded as our richest, dearest treasures,
As sweetest balm to soothe our spirit-smarts.

In the lone night-time, at the eve's mild splendour,

In the calm stillness of the Sabbath hours,
Shall memories of Thy love so deep, so tender,
Fall on our hearts in holy blessing-showers.

At the spread table, where Thy body broken

And poured-out blood in shadows forth are set,
Gazing upon each clear, each speaking token,


How shall we *there* Thy matchless love forget?

In the dread hour when flesh and heart are dying,

Thy love the glooming and the woe shall cheer;
We shall not shrink, but breathe out our last sighing,
As childhood's sleep, knowing that Thou art near.

Jesus! Redeemer! e'en in glory dwelling,

Circled by love-looks of bright seraphim,
Still shall Thy love, all other loves excelling,
Make angel-tendernesses dark and dim!



III.

“Strengthen Thou me according to Thy word.” *Psa. cxix, 28.*

SAVIOUR, great Strengtheners of mortal weakness,

Imparter of true grace, when grace is meet,

Behold me now in humble trust and meekness

Low kneeling at Thy feet.

Unto the prophet by Hiddekèl's river,

Thou didst send forth an angel robed as man,

Gifted with strength, which with a thrilling quiver

Through the seer's weak frame ran ;—

And, strengthened, he beheld the wondrous vision,

Heard the words spoken by the water side,

And went on with his life's foretelling mission,

Strong, hopeful, purified.

Far weaker than that prophet's fainting spirit,
Is this weak heart to face earth's woe and care,
It seemeth e'en too feeble to inherit
The joy to which 'tis heir.

Lay Thy hand, Saviour, on my spirit trembling,
Speak Thou the clear, low words of hope and life;
The prophet's heart mine dimly then resembling,
Shall press on in the strife.

O Jesus! strengthen me for life and dying,
For the wild tempest and the waveless calm,
For the joy-shouting and the prayerful crying,
For battle and the palm !

Let but Thy voice say—" O thou weak and fearful,
Peace be with thee ; be strong, yea, be thou strong ;"
I shall pass on, no longer vainly tearful,
But girded with a song.

IV.

“Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.” JOHN xiv, 8.

SHOW me the Father: loving Saviour, Thou
From aye unto His bosom clasped didst dwell,
Give me to gaze upon Thy holy brow,
And see the Father's likeness visible.

I am a child, a tottering, yearling child,
My fingers tremble, and I need a palm
Wherein to place them: O Thou Undeiled,
Show me the Father's power and Father's calm.

I am unsatisfied: Thy world is bright,
And very beautiful in every part,
My soul is ever full of earth's delight,
Yet still the yearning clings unto my heart.

Show me the Father,—sight that will suffice
To still the never-ceasing cry for good,
To make heaven's peacefulness shine in my eyes,
My heart with angel-sympathies imbued.

V.

“Jesus saith unto her, ‘Mary!’” JOHN XX, 16.

O SAVIOUR, at Thy tomb we standing weep

E'en as thou still did'st sleep ;

We cannot feel that thou art risen high

Beyond the cloudy sky :

Our hearts droop downward, darkly sorrowful,

Laden, and worn, and dull.

Come nigh us, Saviour ! even as to her

Who by the sepulchre

Stood too, and wept, unheeding the white light,

The lightning-like and bright,

Which streamed from out Thy cave—Thy rocky bed,

From place of feet and head.

Yet, O our Saviour, lest our darkened eyes

Be slow to recognize,

Preface Thy gentlest words with each earth-name

We trembling watchers claim,

So that our hearts, at the first spoken word,

May joyfully be stirred,

And we may turn in gladness round to meet

Thy look of kindness sweet,

And say, "Our Master," with the self-same tone

She uttered, whose low moan

Was heard amid the darkness, while morn's star

Shone peacefully afar.



VI.

“Then came Jesus, the doors being shut.” JOHN XX, 26.

I AM alone, O Saviour ; all my doors—

My heart's doors—are close barred at this still time.

Now let Thy feet be heard along the floors,

The while Thy priestly garments softly chime.

O come and shew to me Thy wounded side,

Thy hands yet red with blood—Thy very own!—

Thy pierced feet,—O, Thou Great Crucified,

The ruddy memories of Thy thorny crown !

I would behold them all ; for faith is weak,

And hope is dim, and love has grown a-cold ;—

O come !—earth's spell shall at Thy presence break,

Time and eternity their depths unfold :

And I shall fall down at Thy feet, and say,
 “My Lord! my God!” and then my eyes will dim
With tears of gladsome love, and all my way
 Henceforward will be as the way of him

Who, after his dark dreary unbelief,
 Lived calmly on a life of holy faith,
Preaching his Master’s word in joy and grief,
 Dying, ’neath tropic suns, a martyr’s death.

VII.

"Lord, I believe ; help Thou my unbelief." MARK ix, 24.

"LORD, I believe ; help Thou my unbelief."

So spake the father through his blinding tears,
And instantly the load of many years
Was lifted, and the worn lad found relief.

Lord, I believe ; but with a faith so weak


I cannot even name it hope or trust :

My soul lies low and moaning in the dust,
I tremble, daring scarce to rise and speak,

Knowing not what to say. O Thou whose ear

Caught the full meaning of those broken tones,

Severed the faith from earth's low fearing moans,
Be near me, too, my whispering faith to hear !



Turn not my prayer away, O Crucified !

Hush Thou the unbelief which rises high,
Threatening to drown faith's feeble infant cry—
Strengthen the faith so frail, so weak, so tried.

“ Lord, I believe ; help Thou my unbelief ! ”

With faltering tones I say this faltering prayer ;—
Let all I bring to Thee Thy mercy share,
Bind Thou my loved in Thy salvation's sheaf !

VIII.

"He is risen!" MARK XVI, 6.

HARP and psaltery awake

Joyously ;

Cymbal loud the silence break,—

'*Ἡγέρθη !*

Glorious angel tidings run

Speedily :

With the early rising sun

'*Ἡγέρθη !*

Nought the seal, the watchers nought,

Gloriously ;

Far exceeding mortal thought

'*Ἡγέρθη !*



Death ! upon thy realm, this morn,
Tremblingly
Lookest thou, with look forlorn,—
'Hγέρθη !

Grave ! the stone is rolled away—
He is free !
Thou hast lost thy noblest prey,—
'Hγέρθη !

Earth ! the terror now is o'er ;
Man can see
Through the grave the starry floor,—
'Hγέρθη !

Let once more the cymbals ring
Gladly,
Organs loud their thunders fling,—
'Hγέρθη !

Join we in the angel strain,

Heartily,

Sending round the glad refrain—

'*Ἠγέρθη* !

IX.

“The Lord hath anointed me . . . to comfort all that
mourn.” ISAIAH lxi, 1, 2.

THOU art anointed, not for war and strife,
Not for the wearing of an earthly crown,
But for the comforting of earth's dark life—
The raising up of those by grief bowed down.

Thou comfortest the mourning ;—those who stand
In tears beside a yet uncovered grave,
Clasping the trembling fingers of each hand—
Hands which could not from death the best
loved save.

Thou comfortest the mourning ;—those who die
Leaving their dearest lonely upon earth,
With wounds aye bleeding from the severed tie,
With hearts aye sundered from all merry mirth.

Thou comfortest the mourning ;—those who part,
One speeding to the distant rising sun,
One lingering in the west with quivering heart—
In flesh divided, yet in spirit one.

Thou comfortest the mourning ;—those who bear
Within their souls a deep and hidden grief,
Who days and nights in silent anguish wear,
Knowing no comfort save Thy sweet relief.

Thou comfortest the mourning ;—those who sink
In fear's dark waters, losing sight of heaven,
And, horror-stricken, vainly, wildly think
Their sins too awful e'er to be forgiven.

O Thou whose dews fall on the broken reed,
 Making it meet for melody again,
We, earth's sad children, from grief's thralldom freed,
 Lift up to Thee our thankful, loving strain ! 4

X.

“He shall come down as rain upon the mown grass; as
showers that water the earth.” PSALM lxxii, 6.

THE showers pass o’er the earth,—the dropping rain

Falling on hill and plain,

Freshens the rose-buds after sultry hours,

Freshens the full-blown flowers;

E’en thus Thou comest down upon the heart

Freed from all sorrow’s smart,

And opening, flower-like, its bright coloured leaves,

So that its inmost core each breeze of joy receives.

The drops fall also on fields dark and brown,

The grass by scythe mown down,

And over all the meadows shorn are seen

Blades of the spring’s first green ;

E'en thus thy presence to the sorely tried,
Mown down in hour of pride,
And feeling all of joy and glory gone
From that bright circlet where in beauty late they
shone.

The world is fuller of mown grass than flowers
On these still Sabbath hours;
O Saviour, come down like the rain-showers bright,
Sparkling with drops of light;
Glad hearts shall be more gladsome; tender green
In dry hearts shall be seen;
And songs by earthly voices shall be heard
Through the tumultuous strains by angel-harpings
stirred.

XI.

“Then Jesus saith unto them, children, have ye any meat?
They answered him, No.” JOHN xxi, 5.

I HEARD my Saviour say the other morn,
“Child, hast thou any meat?”
I answered, “No,” for I had toiled forlorn
Yet found no food to eat.

He stood before me in the twilight dim
So that I scarce could see,
Yet by His voice and care, I knowing Him,
My heart leaped joyously.

He bade me cast my needy, empty net
Down on another side;
The waves were rich, my table forth was set,
And I was satisfied.

Since then I fish not blindly, but first turn
Unto the nearer brink,
My Master hearing my thought to Him yearn
Gives more than I can think.

My Master, Saviour, Guardian, Friend, and more
Than any earth-names tell,
For ever let me see Thee on yon shore,
Till there with Thee I dwell !

XII.

“Deliver him from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom.” JOB xxxiii, 24.

WHERE didst Thou find the ransom, O my God,
Whereby man might be brought back from the pit
And raised to glory? What great price could fit
The crime committed by so vile a clod?

Did some great angel lay aside his plumes
Made of the bright and pure and “downy gold,”
And with these mortal weeds his form enfold,
The while he lit the lamp which earth illumines?

Or did a burning seraph pierce the dark,
And let the pit-chains round and on him lie,
And feel with us how hard it was to die,
How strange the quenching of life's little spark ?

Not so; not so; upon Thy bosom lay
Throughout eternity the glorious Son,
The very God, who knew no time begun,
Yet bore earth's anguish and our heavy clay.

O Father God ! how could'st Thou give Him up
To the dark wandering on this sinful round,
To the red agony and death he found
Within the mixture of the bitter cup ?

O Saviour God ! what made Thee come to bear
Our sins and sorrows on Thy sacred head,
While we, unheeding sin and all its dread,
Put up no cry to have thy mercy spare ?

O Love, that knowest neither depth nor height,
Nor length nor breadth ! O glorious, wondrous
plan,

Imagined not by angel strong nor man,
How shall we think, and love, and praise aright !

O Saviour, say Thy pleading words for me;—

“Deliver from the fearful going down,

I have paid down the ransom,—give the crown !”

So that I Thee may praise eternally !

XIII.

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus." REVELATION xxii, 20.

COME even so, as when Thou wentest up,
Robed in the whiteness of a snowy cloud,
Piercing the deep blue of the air-built cope,
Passing adown amid each starry crowd,
Thy nail-marked hands uplifted blessingly
As in the parting hour at Bethany.

Come even so, as Thou didst, ending, say
Unto the loved Apostle when he stood,
And saw the vision of Thy holy day,
Upon the rock ringed by the ocean flood ;
Quick be Thy speeding, swift Thy coming down,
To gather all the jewels of Thy crown !

Come even so, and let Time's woe be o'er,

Its crime all vanished as a dream of night,

Heaven's pearl-gates opened wide for evermore

For pilgrims from the distant orbs of light:

We, thinking ever of Thy Father's home,

Repeat the words—"Even so, Saviour, come!"

XIV.

“By Thy holy Nativity and Circumcision ; by Thy Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation ; by Thine Agony and bloody Sweat ; by Thy Cross and Passion ; by Thy precious Death and Burial ; by Thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension ; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, good Lord, deliver us ! ”

LITANY.

By Thy strange childhood's years, Thou Holy Child,
Thy meek obedience to Thy mother's word,
Thy temple worship, Thy down sitting mild,
Where knowledge-seeking listeners wisdom heard,
O pity earth's young children, who are now
As once Thou wert when earthward Thou didst bow !

By Thy calm baptism in Jordan's tide,

In presence of the thousands gathered round,
Thy prayer while coming up the willowed side,
The dove-like fluttering, and the heavenly sound,
Be with us when in lowly hope we tread
The path by which, O Leader, Thou hast led.

By Thy drear fasting in the desert sand,

Thy wandering 'mid the rocks of ancient times,
The tempting which we may not understand
Until we hear yon golden city's chimes,
Sustain us, when within our souls we feel
The Tempter's arrows sharper than cold steel.

By Thy long journeyings through Judah's land,

Thy ceaseless onward going to do good,
Thy voice of comfort, Thy kind, healing hand,
Thy matchless tenderness to earth's harsh mood,
O help us, whensoever we try to put
Within Thy prints each feeble, trembling foot.

By Thy near standing at an opened tomb,
Thy tears which with the sisters' fell like rain,
Thy word of promise piercing deathly gloom,
As star the darkness—"He shall rise again!"
O comfort us, when tearfully we lay
Our darlings in earth's cold and dreary clay.

By thy dark watching 'neath the olive trees,
Thy sweat which dropt down red within that shade,
Thy threefold prayer, Thy lonely agonies
Which made Thee not despise an angel's aid,
O strengthen us in sorrow, though our woe
Beside Thy anguish may no naming know.

By Thy soul-darkness on the bloody cross,
Thy jagged, bleeding wounds and thorny crown,
Thy turning into gain the sufferer's loss,
Thy precious death, Thy burial's lying down,
Support us dying; let us leave in rest
Our sleeping bodies cradled on earth's breast.

By Thy uprising in the dawning hour,
Leaving Thy sepulchre aflush with light,
Thy glad ascending to the Throne of Power,
Circled by countless hosts of angels bright,
Aid us to leave our broken graves and rise
With Thee beyond the distant, starry skies.

And by the sending of the Holy Ghost
Upon Thy people left on earth alone,
We, Thy own gathered "sacramental host,"
Call unto Thee our feeble prayers to own ;
O hallow, strengthen, comfort us, we cry,
Till we behold Thy unveiled majesty !

XV.

"Now is Christ risen from the dead." 1 CORINTHIANS XV, 22.

THOU didst arise,
What time the moon show low in western skies,
And as the soldiers' iron armour clashed,
Their breast-plates back her silver radiance flashed ;
The young Spring stood in waiting at Thy tomb
With her fair gifts,—green leaves, small buds, first
bloom ;
The winds came shyly wandering round about
Watching till Thou, Redeemer, shouldst come out.

Thou didst arise,
The Roman soldiers fell back in surprize,
Their mailed heels ringing on the rocky ground,
Their long swords trailing with a sharp, clear sound,
While Thou did'st take Thy own majestic way
Above them, as in terror scared they lay ;
Upon Thy holy face that glorious while,
The shining of a great and solemn smile.

Thou didst arise,
Leaving Thy tomb wide open, for our eyes
To look into, when wearily we tread
With sudden thoughts of death disquieted,
Leaving Thy grave-clothes scattered on the floor,
For us to wrap our brows in, when doth pour,
The death-dew down our cheeks, and in our hearts
We feel the spirit fluttering ere she parts.

Thou didst arise,
Adding one certain plea unto our cries :—
“By Jesus’ resurrection ; by the cave
Open and lone ; the garments of the grave
Lying about unheeded ; by the light
Which thenceforth made all Sabbaths strangely
 bright,
Save us, O God ! give us to rise with Him
Up to the singing choirs of Seraphim !”

Thou didst arise,
O Crucified ! Eternal Sacrifice !
And after treading grief’s wine-press alone,
By the unsealing of the burial stone,
The covenant of our God didst seal and sign,—
The covenant reddened first by blood of Thine,
Which streamed on Calvary from brow and side,
And hands and feet, a precious crimson tide.

Thou didst arise,
My hope ! my Saviour ! my heart for Thee sighs
On this Thy resurrection morn ; do Thou,
O Risen One, reveal unto me now
Thy love and sweetness ; I would fain draw near
And nearer unto Thee while dwelling here,
And gazing after death upon Thy face,
Take up beneath Thy feet my changeless place !

XVI

“Abide with us.” LUKE xxiv, 29.

ABIDE with me ; when thou didst condescend,
To join me on my walk one Sabbath day,
And in communion one blest hour to spend
Whereof the memory ne’er shall fade away,
I felt my heart within me strangely burn ;—
O for such converse evermore I yearn !

Abide with me ; come not at morn or eve,
Or only when I celebrate Thy feast,
But with me stay, and never, never leave
My trembling steps alone the very least,
Else haply I shall fall, and lose my way
Unto that land where Thou dost dwell for aye.

Abide with me ; unto my heart unfold

The words which often understanding not I read,
Thy depths of love and tenderness untold

Reveal unto me in each hour of need ;
Redeemer ! Saviour ! none can teach as Thou,
Set me Thy lessons, Teacher, even now.

Abide with me ; my morn of life may soon

Lose all its brightness, and change suddenly
Into the swiftly passing afternoon,

Followed by shadows frowning gloomily ;
I cannot enter into that deep night
Without Thy smile to give me peace and light.

Abide with me ; O Saviour, I would go

Up through this earth-wild leaning upon Thee,
Strengthened, supported, comforted below

By Thy strong arm ever enfolding me ;
Yet once again I pray ; O Lord, abide,
On earth—through time—for ever by my side !

XVII.

THE GATHERING HOME.

THEY are gathering homeward from every land

One by one,

As their weary feet touch the shining strand

One by one,

Their brows are enclosed in a golden crown,

Their travel-stained garments are all laid down,

And clothed in white raiment they rest on the mead,

Where the Lamb loveth His chosen to lead,

One by one.

Before they rest they pass through the strife

One by one,

Through the waters of death they enter life

One by one,

To some are the floods of the river still

As they ford on their way to the heavenly hill,

To others the waves run fiercely and wild,

Yet all reach the home of the Undefined

One by one.

We too shall come to that river side

One by one,

We are nearer its waters each eventide

One by one,

We can hear the noise and dash of the stream

Now and again through our life's deep dream,

Sometimes the floods all the banks o'erflow,

Sometimes in ripples the small waves go.

One by one.

Jesus ! Redeemer ! we look to Thee

One by one,

We lift up our voices tremblingly

One by one,

The waves of the river are dark and cold,

We know not the spots where our feet may hold ;

Thou who didst pass through in deep midnight,

Strengthen us, send us the staff and the light,

One by one.

Plant Thou Thy feet beside as we tread

One by one,

On Thee let us lean each drooping head

One by one,

Let but Thy strong arm around us be twined,

We shall cast all our fears and cares to the wind,

Saviour ! Redeemer ! with Thee full in view,

Smilingly, gladsomely, shall we pass through,

One by one.

XVIII.

“Go thou in peace.”

Go thou in peace: we will not mar

Thy joy while being blest;

But standing reverently afar

Behold thee enter rest.

Go thou in peace: the vale is bright

As with the beams of day;

Christ is thy Sun, thy Life, thy Light,

His rod and staff thy stay.

Go thou in peace: thy day hath been

Nor clear nor dark, of twain

A mixture—light without;—within,

Dark suffering and pain.

Go thou in peace : the even-time
Has brought with it a smile,
Such as oft-times, when vespers chime,
O'erspreads the sky awhile.

Go thou in peace : our eyes grow dim,
Impulsively we lean,
To keep aside the seraphim,
Who crowding come between.

Yet go in peace : we striving, still
The bitter rising cry,
Depart thou first to rest ; we will
Be with thee by-and-by.

XIX.

“How long ? How long ?”

“How long ? how long ?” Till thy gold-fashioned
crown

Be finished, perfect in its dazzling brightness,
Some tears soft falling yet must trickle down

Thy cheek, death-ashy in its pallid whiteness,—
Tears which turned into gems of light shall shine
'Mid the rich leafage of its intertwine.

“How long? how long?” Till from thy fainting
frame

All human strength shall have in weakness
vanished;

Till from thy thought e'en vigour's very name

Shall be in silentness proscribed and banished,
Then shall the deathless strength of angels run
Through thy veins, swift as glance of rising sun.

“How long? how long?” Till thy deep, painful
thirst

Becometh all unquenchèd in its sadness,
Then shall the founts of living water burst

In cool, bright gushes, with music-tones of gladness,
Laving thy brow, and from thy peace-filled heart
Bidding the memory of dark days depart.

“How long? how long?” A few more hours of pain,
Some moments yet of prayerful, anxious longing,
Then shalt thou hear the seraph’s triumph-strain
Shalt see fond, loving ones around thee thronging,
Shalt feel all weariness and sorrow cease,
Lost in the fulness of deep joy and peace.

“How long? how long?” Sweet Spirit, deepened
sounds
Tell of the nearing of the car of splendour,
The “chariot wheels” swift pass the parting bounds,
He comes, thy Saviour ever true and tender;
His arms shall be thy sheltered resting-place,
Thine eyes shall brighten gazing on His face.

XX.

“Where hast thou gleaned to-day?” RUTH ii, 17.

WHERE have I gleaned to-day? my Lord, my God,
The field was ripe and I was soon abroad,
What time the reapers cut the first white sheaf,
Binding around the corn with flower and leaf:

And the stray ears lay thick upon the ground,
I could not stretch my hand out but I found
Full treasures waiting for the gleaner's store,
For summer's joyance and for winter's frore.

Yet ah ! my Lord, a haze was o'er my eyes,
My heart was fearful and surcharged with sighs,
And thus the ears were often left unseen,
And riches strewed the field where I had been.

Still were the bounties of Thy field so great,
That what I gathered had the power to sate
The hunger of my soul ; yet evermore
To make it long again for Thy sweet store.

My Lord ! my God ! take from my heart these fears,
Dry from my eyes these earthly blinding tears,
That ere the harvest home is gathered in,
I may a full, bright sheaf of beauty win.

XXI.

“They went and told Jesus.” MATTHEW xiv, 12.

WHEN their great hope was laid within the ground,
They went to Jesus telling him their woe ;
Ah ! surely then the hidden spring they found
From which their dried-up fountain used to flow !

And sitting at His blessed feet, they heard
Sublimèr teachings than their buried seer
Was wont to utter, and their souls were stirred
In the lone desert with celestial cheer.

Thus come we to Thee, Master, in the hour

When we our dearest treasures buried leave,
And Thou, forgiving all our former store
Of sins, and far cold wanderings, dost relieve,

And comfortest with comfort, until we

Say, "It is well that earthly gladness fails,
That hopes sink down as suns beneath the sea,
That daylight passes and the night prevails ;

"Since evermore in woe to Thee we turn,

And evermore Thy love Thou dost reveal,
And we to heaven draw nearer, and then learn
Some of the blessedness that seraphs feel."

XXII.

"The blind and the lame came to Him in the temple and He
healed them." MATTHEW xxi, 14.

THY temple gates are thronged to day, O Lord,

With lame and blind,

They come expecting not a healing word

From Thee to find;

O wearily they grope along their way,

In darkness, feebleness, from Thee astray.

Wilt Thou not enter in these courts, as when

In Judah's land,

Thou on the temple floors 'mid crowding men

Didst take Thy stand,

Until the blind and lame pressed Thee around,
And, by Thy perfect healing rendered sound,

Went each his way,—one to the sacrifice

Of that bright eve,

To see the symbol sign with those glad eyes

Erst wont to grieve ;—

One to bound up the glorious, high ascent,

And mingle with the worshippers low bent ?—

Lighten our blind, O Lord, that they may see

With vision blest

Thy sacrifice upon the awful tree,

God manifest !

Heal Thou our lame, that they the stairs may climb

Which lead unto Thy dwelling place sublime.

XXIII.

“Jesus having loved His own who were in the world,
He loved them unto the end.” JOHN xiii, 1.

LOVE me too till the end, my God, my Saviour,

Though my behaviour

Be very wilful, and oftentimes unheeding

I hear Thy pleading,

Like to a child whose moods are ever changing

From joy to sorrow, love to coldness, ranging.

My God ! my Saviour ! Thou who changest never,

Yet still for ever

Continuest the same, bear with my weakness,

While I in meekness

Kneel down before Thee, O Thou ever loving,
To seek from Thee Thy favour never moving.

I know that life without Thee would be dreary ;
 Its labour weary ;
Its sweetness comes from Thy exceeding favour;
 Thy love gives savour
To that which else, though ringed with joy and
 brightness,
Would still be nought but one unbroken whiteness.

Yet still to syren voices oft I listen,
 My eyes oft glisten
With joy at visions of earth's fading beauty,
 And thought of duty
Passes away, and I turn madly chasing
The fleeting sounds, the momentary blazing.

Lord ! my Redeemer ! even though I wander,
 And trifles ponder,
Cease not to love me; let Thy arm uphold me,
 And close enfold me
Unto Thy breast, whereon I ever leaning
May look up to Thy face of love-full meaning,

Until the end, when with Thee in Thy glory,
 My life-time's story
May come before me, all my joy increasing,
 So that unceasing
I may with seraphs join Thy praises singing,
Low at Thy feet my blood-bought amaranth flinging.

XXIV.

“They cast them down at Jesus’ feet, and he healed them.”

MATTHEW XV, 20.

THEY came their helpless, stricken, dear ones bringing,
And cast them down at His most blessed feet,
And weary moans gave place to joyous singing,
And anguish faded into rapture sweet :

And all that night long rays of light shot streaming,
From lonely cottages erst still and drear,
And opened eyes with joy and love were beaming,
And unheard voices rose with cadence clear.

Saviour, who though unseen remainest ever,
Even the same as when through Judah's land
Thy feet went onward, worn yet resting never,
Seeking the wanderers from the angel-band.

I come to Thee, my helpless darlings laying
In faith and patience down before Thy throne,
In fervent, yet in broken tones oft saying ;—
“Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst, and Thou alone.”

Heal now, as erst, those that have need of healing,
Speak, as of old, the word of wondrous might,
Long closèd lids with tenderness unsealing,
Recalling dying souls to life and light.

XXV.

“Meine Seele hanget dir an ; deine rechte Hand erhält mich.”

PSALM lxiii, 9.

HANGETH my soul on Thee !

Night cometh, and I softly fall asleep
Upon Thy breast ; and morning breezes sweep
Laden with fragrance to them only known,
And I awake, and find my arms still thrown
Around Thee lovingly ; and all the day
I nestle closely, and my lips aye say,—

Hangeth my soul on Thee !

Thy hand supporteth me,
Else my weak arms would soon unloose their hold,
And I should slip adown upon the wold,
And wander losing sight of Thee and heaven;
My feet with rugged flints all red and riven;
Now safely rest, I feeling fear nor care,
Since in Thy arms Thou dost the feeble bear;
Thy hand supporteth me !

My Father, carry me
Whither Thou wilt; through regions wild and drear,
Through floods of waters, with no land to cheer
My pining vision; or into thick night
So dark, that neither moon nor starry light
May shine upon me, lighting with a glance
The rocks—the sands—the watery, waste expanse
Through which Thou carriest me.

Father, I rest on Thee,
And while my face is hid upon Thy breast,
And I unto Thy heart am closely prest,
The love-full beatings of that heart shall chase
Each lurking fear from its dim hiding place;
What power can hurt me since Thy heart beats warm,
Since ever thus Thy strong and mighty arm
Gently enfoldeth me?

“Hangeth my soul on Thee!”
Throughout this holy Sabbath’s quiet time,
From blushing sunrise till the sunset chime,
My heart has kept repeating whisperingly,
These childlike words of precious memory,
And evermore, as if antiphonal,
Thy voice has answered to my spirit’s call;—
“My hand supporteth Thee!”

XXVI.

"He shall sit as a Refiner." MALACHI iii, 3.

THE gold is in the crucible, and Thou
Sittest to watch beside ;
With Thine own precious hands the fire is fed,
O, Thou once sorely tried,
And we know that no coal more than is meet
Will be for food supplied.

The crucible groweth red hot, and still
Thou keepest Thy love-watch ;
The gold beginneth now to melt and run—
Thou leanest o'er to catch
The first dim, broken reflex, which can scarce
The leaning glory match.

Still hotter glows the fire, still melts the gold,

Till pure, refined, and bright

Shines in the crucible the liquid pool,

And renders back to sight

Thy glorious image, well-defined and clear,

Beaming with love and light.

Holy Refiner ! when Thou seest meet

For us the burning fire,

Give us to see Thee sitting by its flame,

So into strong desire

The grief will change, and we of the red heat

Will neither faint nor tire,

But ever pray ;—heap Thou the fuel on

Until the gold-stream flow—

Until, while in Thy love Thou gazest down,

Thy likeness bright Thou know—

That likeness which shall ever fixed remain

When heaven's cool breezes blow.

XXVII.

“I sleep, but my heart waketh.” SONG OF SOLOMON v, 2.

THOU stoodest softly knocking all last night,
Until the falling dew-drops filled Thy hair ;
Earth's dream, alas, was then surpassing bright,
Most exquisitely fair !

Thy voice came stealing to me through the door—

“Open to me : I come to save and bless ;
As my feet glide along thy heart's cold floor
Thou shalt feel tenderness

“And love around Thee, deeper far than earth

Can give unto thee in her hour of pride ;
I will sit down beside thee on thy hearth,
While thou art satisfied.”

Ev'n through my sleep, my dream, I heard and rose,
And went the door-leaves widely to unfold :
Ah me ! Thou hadst withdrawn Thee at the close,
As my sad heart foretold.

I seek Thee, O my Saviour : all the morn
I've followed, half in dark and half in light,
Searching some lone print from Thy feet fresh born,
To guide my steps aright.

Yet still I find Thee not, and pleading say :
"Forgive the wildness of my heart's earth-dream,
Reveal Thyself unto me in the way,
With the sun's rising beam,

"And, entering my opened portals, be
For evermore my heart's beloved Guest,
Ruling its passion-storms with majesty,
Stilling its fears to rest."

XXVIII.

“And when they had lifted up their eyes they saw no man
but Jesus only.” MATTHEW xvii, 8.

MOSES ! Elias ! One to whom death came
In silence on the mountain's topmost peak,
The other whom the seraphs stooped to seek,
And wrapt him homeward in the flashing flame ;—

They fade away, their light-crowned brows grow dim
Within the glory of the o'ershadowing cloud,
From out whose centre sounds forth clear and loud
God's solemn voice, bidding us turn to Him.

Who now alone remains, still—silent—calm—
The Godhead folded round in shrouding clay,
Yet through the shadow cleaving out a way
In words, looks, actions full of grace and balm.

Thus, while in silent rapture oft we bend

With friends beloved upon our spirit's mount,

And in their converse days nor moments count,

God calls them into glory to ascend,

And the cloud shadows them, and we no more

Behold their faces beaming on our own,

And in that first sad parting, feeling lone,

We droop our heads in anguish deep and sore.

Yet let them go ; for Thou art with us still,

Our Lord and Master, and we see Thee stand

With face of tenderness, and outstretched hand,

And voice the spirit's inmost depths to thrill.

O Thou, whose love surpasses all earth's love,

Ev'n when it burns with brightest, softest glow,

Give us to feel Thy sheltering love, that so

We may not mourn though all our loved remove !

XXIX.

“I am Thine ; save me.” PSALM cxix, 94.

SIN burdens me, my Saviour; voices broken
Are all that I can bring,
One word alone, by parted Psalmist spoken,
My heart comes uttering ;
One ray alone athwart my soul doth shine :—
“Save me, for I am Thine !”

Hast Thou not bought me with Thy blood atoning ?
Was not my ransom paid
When at Thy long, last, bitter, deathly moaning,
Earth shuddered as afraid ?
On that atonement may I not recline,
Feeling that I am Thine ?

Yes, surely I am Thine ; have I not kneeling,
None nigh me saving Thee,
With solemn, passionate, and earnest feeling,
Ay, even tearfully,
Said thus ; “ My Lord, I am no longer mine,
But ever, ever Thine ? ”

Hast Thou not seen me at Thy table bending,
And heard the fervent cry,
Unheard by man, up to the Throne ascending,
Where Thou dost reign on high ?
“ O Jesus ! by the symbol bread and wine,
I am not mine, but Thine ! ”

And still I sin, to earth's enchantments yielding
As seen one after one,
Oft striving to push back Thy arm enshielding,
That I may freely run
After her pleasures, and all thought resign
That I am Thine, not mine.

Yet save me ; claim me as to Thee belonging
By every precious right,
So that when round Thy seat the world is thronging,
Judge, holy, infinite !
I may but hear : " This soul shall tread my shrine,
Since it is wholly mine ? "

XXX.

“Remember Thy word unto Thy servant whereon Thou hast
caused me to hope.” PSALM cxix, 49.

REMEMBER now Thy word, for, ah ! it came
Nigh to my heart,
And Hope leaped up into a radiant flame
With joyous start.

Thy tokens Thou hast given me morn and eve
So oft to see,
That I have quite forgotten how to grieve,
Or mournfully

To droop my head while I my prayer-tones breathe
 Into Thine ear,
And hopes and longings close together wreath
 Feeling Thee near.

My God, I keep a never-ceasing watch,
 Straining my sight,
The first ray-shootings eagerly to catch
 Of promised light ;

And now I plead : Remember Thou the word
 Whereupon Thou
Didst cause this heart to hope, when darkly stirred,
 I sat with brow

O'ershadowed, and in sad and weary mood,
 Murmuring one cry,—
My Father, send me “tokens” down “for good,”
 From yonder sky.

XXXI.

“Lasz mich nicht, und thue nicht von mir die Hand ab, Gott,
mein Heil.” PSALM xxvii, 9.

LET not my hand go, O my God, though I

Oft wilfully

Strive to withdraw it, so that I may run

Where in the sun

Flitteth some butterfly with glancing wing,

Gem glistening.

O Father, where the flowers are fairest, snares

Lurk unawares ;

Where the path seems the smoothest, pitfalls lie

Most hiddenly ;

E'en though I strive, O Father, keep me so,

Nor let me go.

Fain would I walk with Thee, even as he
Who ne'er did see
Death, but "was not," what time Thy whisper stole
Into his soul,
Perchance on mountain-top, in meadow green,
'Mid hearth-lit scene.

Thus would I walk with Thee, trusting and calm,
Feeling Thy palm
Circling my tiny hand ; conversing oft,
In whispers soft
With Thee, while gladnesses unspeakable
My bosom swell.

Thus on through life, and through the river, death,
My lightest breath
Unquickened, though around the billows roar
Lashing the shore,
Knowing Thy loving care and tenderness
Are none the less.

My Father ! my salvation's God ! I cry

Most earnestly,

Let not my hand go ; never, never leave

From morn to eve,

From eve to morn, until with joy I stand

Safe in Thy land !

XXXII.

“His servants shall serve Him.” REV. xxii, 3.

THUS mourned I : O my God, my King, unholy
Is every offering I present, none wholly
Free from sin's soiling ;
Earth-tendernesses with my hymns aye blending,
World-vanities with my best prayers ascending,
My “Come” with “Well said” is for ever ending,
All service spoiling.

My life will soon be over ; I shall enter
Thy universal kingdom's glorious centre
Thy throne enshrining ;
My working day will then be past for ever,
I shall no more be able to endeavour,
A wreath by me entwined Thou shalt see never
Before Thee shining.

Fain would I serve Thee, for Thy blood has bought
me,
And hitherto Thy tender love has brought me
My weak steps guiding ;
I would show gratitude and loving feeling,
In acts my very heart's full depths revealing,
The willing rapturous blessedness unsealing,
With joy confiding.

And God said to me :—In my home of glory
Where all the ransomed nations stand before me
With palms and splendour,
There is no idlesse ; white wings ever winging
In holy ministrations ; joyous singing
Unshadowed ; and the glorified aye bringing
Fresh crowns to render.

“ My servants there shall serve me ! ” O word sweeter
Than, “ There shall be no death ! ” far, far completer
Than “ Past is sighing ! ”
Teach me, O God, while here I have my dwelling,
The alphabet of service, and the spelling,
And key-note of the anthem ever swelling
From lips undying.

XXXIII.

“I will be as the dew unto Israel.” HOSEA xiv, 5.

DROP down, O Dew !

The hours of night are very still and calm,
I hear nought but the wind within the palm,
And dream of victory, of joy untold,
Of resting in the Shepherd's guarded fold.

Drop down, O Dew !

From out the heaven rich with its countless stars,
Unflecked as yet by the east's cloudy bars ;
I would not that the sky with morning's rose
Should flush until my buds their hearts disclose.

Drop down, O Dew !

For I would bring some offering to present
To Him who hath me life and being lent,
A wreath to cast before Him, though it be
His own free gift in tenderness to me.

Drop down, O Dew !

That Patience may her fair white flowers unfold,
That Love may crimson ; that in burning gold
Faith may trail down her blossoms, and that green,
Soft, swelling buds on Hope's branch may be seen.

Drop down, O Dew !

Without Thee every bud will brown and fall,
Each leaf will wither, and no coronal
Will be within my hands, when yonder sky
Rends to receive the coming Majesty.

XXXIV.

“Wenn mein Geist in Aengsten ist, so nimmst Du Die
meiner an.” PSALM cxlii, 4.

O FATHER, choose we not our mother's breast

Whereon to grieve,

Whether the woe be for dark sin confest

On some dim eve,

Whether for loss of aught we treasure best,

Or friend we leave ?

And does not that same mother's arm enfold

With fonder press

The weeper, whether sin be freely told

With mournfulness,

Whether from aught else spring the uncontrolled

Sore soul-distress ?

O Thou, who dost Thy love to that compare
Of mother mild,
Aye thinking most of those who sorrows bear
With anguish wild,
Whatever be the cause which thus may tear
The grieving child:

The holy Sabbath eve is here, and I,
Laden with sin,
Come, daring scarce to lift my tearful eye,
While I begin
My sad confession,—guilt of crimson dye
Without—within.

Draw me, my Father, closer unto Thee,
That I may weep
Upon Thy breast, and ever timidly
Still nearer creep,
Until I hear Thy voice, forgiving me,
Above me sweep.

XXXV.

“Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples
whom Jesus loved.” JOHN xiii, 23.

O to be nearer Thee ! Throughout this day
My heart has ceased not ever thus aspiring,
All else seems worthless, vain and childish play,
My spirit’s want with hollow mockery tiring;
I only pine and sigh
To feel Thee ever nigh,
And to look up to Thee with joy admiring.

I once thought,—’twas a loving, simple thought,—
That Mary’s place of all had most of sweetness,
When she sat at Thy feet and cared for nought
But listening to Thy words of rich completeness,

And watching all the while
Thy holy, gracious smile
Shining down on her in her growing meetness.

Am I presumptuous grown? for ah! now I
Feel as if nought could satisfy, but leaning
With John upon Thy breast, while Thy kind eye
Rests on me with its deep and loving meaning,
And Thy soft, gentle voice
Bids me in Thee rejoice,
All spirit-storms with tenderness serenening.

My Lord, my hope, my joy, my all in all!
I cry to Thee; let me get ever nearer;
Let what will come, gladness or woe befall,
So that Thy presence may to me be dearer,
And I each moment know
More of Thy love below,
Beholding Thee each day with vision clearer.

XXXVI.

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my
soul after Thee." PSALM xlii, 1.

"My soul thirsteth after Thee as a thirsty land."
PSALM cxliii, 6.

"My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for
the morning." PSALM cxxx, 6.

THE hunted deer after the water brooks

Eagerly looks,

And pants to hear their wavelets rippling o'er

The pebbly floor;

Even so I

Panting for Thee oft sigh !

The sun-dried earth thirsts for the freshening shower,
For clouds to lower,
And bring to her, with their cool splashing floods,
Her soft green buds;
Even so I
Thirsting for Thee oft sigh.

The watchman, pacing with his weary feet
The narrow street,
Watches the first, dim flush of light to see
Morn's heraldry;
Even so I
Watching for Thee oft sigh.

Thou art as to the watchman, morning's birth;
As to the earth,
The falling rain; as to the hunted deer,
The brooklet clear;
Therefore do I
Pant, thirst, and watch, and sigh !

XXXVII.

“Grant that the beauty and brightness of nature around us
may be typical of the beauty and brightness of spiritual
life within our souls.”

I LOOK without; from 'mid a mass of green
High palms are seen;
The sunshine rests on flower, and herb, and tree
Most lovingly;
Brightness and beauty all around me gleam,
Fair as a dream.

I look within; a cloudy gloominess

On all doth press;

My few, young leaves glisten not in the ray

Of blushing day;

I cannot see with my dim, longing eyes

The upper skies.

I pray; O send Thy sunshine, dews, and rains

Upon my plains;

Scatter my clouds, and let Thy breezes blow

On me below,

That life without may of life spiritual

Be typical !

XXXVIII.

“Let Thy loving spirit lead me forth unto the land of
uprightness.” PSALM cxliii, 10. (*Prayer Book version.*)

SPIRIT of tenderness, who ledest ever
To yon bright land,
Strengthening the heart in every weak endeavour
Earth to withstand:

Lead me; my steps are often slow and weary
On God's highway,
Ofttimes the “look out” seems so dark and dreary
I, weeping, stay;

Complaining thus: "How shall I reach the brightness

Amid this gloom?

For, ah! the land of glory and uprightness

Out-lies the tomb."

The flowers beneath are bright,—I downward gazing

Feel my heart glad,

But when I look up, clouds the goal are hazing,

Dim, gloomy, sad.

And then I doubt whether yon city golden

With its bright spires,

Will ever be by my glad eyes beholden

When Time expires,

And the dread, great Eternity beginning

Its endless round,

Dawns on me. How can I, the ever-sinning,

There blest be found?

I pray, O loving Spirit, for Thy guiding

While wandering here,

For Thy kind, tender, gentle, pitying chiding

To sin and fear.

Then shall the flowers not hinder my on-speeding

With joyous haste,

The darkness shall not see me lost, Thou leading,

Upon the waste.

XXXIX.

“I will not leave you comfortless.” JOHN xiv, 18.

AH no ! We are not comfortless
 Though Thou hast gone away,
Thou very Fount of tenderness,
 Leaving us lone all day
Until Thou comest with the night
 To take us to Thy rest ;
Where circled with pure love and light,
 Upon Thy Father's breast,
We may repose in quietude,
 Feeling quite satisfied,
Knowing no sorrow can intrude
 Among the glorified.

We are not comfortless,—for Thou
On reaching yonder sky,
Though myriads, each with palmy bough
And crown of sanctity,
Thronged round Thee flinging at Thy feet
The tokens of earth-strife,
While with strains jubilant and sweet
The courts of heaven were rife,—
Didst send us down the Comforter,
Our Teacher and our Guide,
For ever through life's whirl and stir
To comfort and abide.

O loving Comforter ! O Dove
Downward meek fluttering !
Proof of our Saviour's tender love,
Our Father's covering wing !

O Sanctifier, who dost make
 Our spirits meet for heaven,
So that we even here partake
 Of joys to sainted given !
We sing Thy power and tender grace,
 We in Thy love confide.
While we through earth's dim precincts pace
 Be ever by our side !

XL.

“ I am the Vine ; ye are the branches.” JOHN xv, 5.

THOU art the living Vine, the branches we ;

O make Thou me

One of those branches, for I ever pine

So to be Thine

As is the branch unto the living vine.

I long to lose my life in Thine,—to say

On every day,

“ I live ;” yet straight thereafter quickly add,

“ Not I, the sad,

But Jesus lives in me, and makes me glad.”

I envy Paul what time he softly said
Of the once Dead,
“We bear about His dying marks : His life
Throughout earth’s strife,
Is manifested in us full and rife.”

O thus to have Thy life in mine out-shown,
Thy very own,
That men may only say of me : “This is
His strength ; and this
His wisdom ; and this joy again *His* bliss ;

“This sympathy is *His* ; *He* ever lives,
And ever gives,
Day after day, the hidden life which we
Outwardly see,
From *His* own boundless, glorious treasury.

“This comfort from *His* fount of comfort flows

’Tis *He* bestows

This peace, so very calm and shadowless ;

His righteousness

Enfoldeth as a snow-white, shining dress.”

O Saviour, make me one with Thee ; I bear

In mind Thy prayer,

And bring it to Thee thus : In that dark night

Of sorrow’s might,

Didst Thou not ask for me this deep delight ?

Grant, therefore, this blest oneness ; let me feel,

As now I kneel,

I have no life whereof to say, ’tis mine,

But only Thine,

I but the branch, and Thou the living Vine !

XLI.

"I besought the Lord for this." 2 Cor. xii, 8.

I CRIED : "Abba, dear Father, hear me soon,

And give to me

That which I pray for ever, the blest boon,

Too eagerly,

That so my soul may rest in some lagoon."

And God thus answered : "Hush thy crying, child ;

Wait thou my time ;

The blessing will descend soft, bright, and mild,

Some morning's prime."

I sank back quietly ; my Father smiled,

And wrapped my soul up in His tenderness,

So that I said,

“When Thou wilt, Father, only ever bless

As now my head,

And me unto Thy bosom closely press ;

So shall I be quite satisfied and calm,

Until Thou see

The time come for the holy blessing-balm,

Then joyously

Shall I take it from out Thy open palm !”

XLII.

"I beseech Thee, shew me Thy glory." EXODUS xxxiii, 18.

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." 2 CORINTHIANS iii, 18.

SHEW me Thy glory : now and then a light

Has flashed down on me, and when I have turned,

My dazzled eyes have distantly discerned

Amid the crystal "terrible" and bright,

One fashioned as a man upon a throne,

And I have bowed to worship, and anon

Looked up to gaze, and found the vision gone,

And I with the strange sapphire light alone.

I wish not only glimpses ; they are fair

But quickly passing, and the glorious rent

Closes up speedily, and all is blent

In one wide, beautiful expanse of air.

But touch my weak, dim eyes with euphrasy,

That I may bear awhile the vision blest,

That I within the glory light may rest

My weary soul in soft tranquillity.

So that by oftentimes gazing on Thy face

I may feel coming over me a change,

Earth's features fading off into a strange

Dim indistinctness, in which I may trace

Thy likeness shining faintly, palely through,

Yet ever brightening by degrees, until

I hear Thy own deep voice my spirit thrill,

And stand with Thee above the star-lit blue.

XLIII.

"The Communion of Saints,"

BLUE is the Sabbath sky without a cloud,
The wind goes murmuring in the lofty palm,
The Eden-relic unto earth allowed
Reigns over all in deep and solemn calm,
And flower-scents wander lightly here and there,
Lading the quiet, gentle, balmy air.

In this soft, soothing, peaceful, holy time
Commune not each with each all blessed saints
In earth and heaven? And as the quarters chime
In bells whose closing music dies and faints
In silentness, does not the converse grow
Deeper and tenderer in its blissful flow?

Prayers softly blend together, till God hears

One pleading cry of faith and love and hope,

“Abba, dear Father!” enter in His ears

Beyond the glory of this sun-bright cope,

While each for each presents his soul’s desire

In words which like to altar-flames aspire.

And songs melt into one ; those who in heaven,—

Their angel-voices sorrowless in tone,

Sing with deep rapturousness the “new song” given

To them on reaching up before the Throne,—

Hear ’mid their pauses earthly hymnings steal,

As echoes following some loud ringing peal.

O blessed ones ! weary and yearning I

Feel joy within my heart what time I think,

How ye on earth for all the weak ones cry,

Lest they within the world’s deep waters sink,

How ye in heaven look down and sympathize

With all lone, fitful strivings for the skies.

I, too, would join your prayings ye who pray
Using the glorious, holy, "Our" and "We,"
And tremblingly my voice would find its way
Into your anthems of ascription, ye
Who raise in heaven the Hallelujah strain
To Him who for the love He bore was slain.

My eyes with blissful, blinding tears grow dim
While I say joyously : "Aye, I believe
In the Communion of all Saints !" one hymn
Chant we together every morn and eve,
The Church is one, whether in heaven or earth,
Some children travelling home, some round the
hearth.

XLIV.

“The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face
shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord
lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace.”


NUMBERS vi, 24—26.

OUR Father give His blessing
Unto thee night and day,
Thy drooping head caressing
His hand upon thee lay ;
And keep thee from all evil
That lurks thy steps around,
To World and Flesh and Devil,
Setting a passless bound.

Our Saviour render shining
His face amid thy night,
Soothing thy spirit's pining
With His most blessed light ;
His loving grace enfold thee,
As yonder blue a star,
Till thou, as He has told thee,
Reach where the holy are.

Our Comforter aye smiling
Lift up His countenance,
Thy weary pathway wiling
Of all its sufferance ;
And give unto thee ever
His calm, unbroken peace,
Smooth as a deep, still river,
Where tides and currents cease.

I with my fondness yearning,
Feeling too weak to bless,
To the great Triune turning
My helpless tenderness,
Pray thus, each fresh word saying
With joyousness and rest,
Knowing while I am praying
Thou, thou art being blest.



XLV.

"I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." MATTHEW xxvi, 29.

"Verily I say unto you, that He shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and come forth and serve them."
LUKE xii, 37.

"WITH me within my Father's realm." My Lord,
What meanest Thou? Thy words are dark :
shall we

Sit down in ranges at an heavenly board

When we Thy splendour's light and glory see?

And wilt Thou gird Thyself and go all round,

Giving to each Thy kingdom's fresh, new wine,

While all the angels hush the ringing sound

Lingering upon their harps with intertwine.

Beholding earth's redeemed ones take the cup
 Filled with the crimson emblem of Thy blood
From those dear hands which once were nailed up,
 And down which poured the precious healing
 flood.

I know not ; yet while sitting at Thy feast,
 And thinking over each word said that eve
By Thee, our Master, I, though less than least,
 Feel with strange blessedness my bosom heave,

While ever and anon my heart to this
 Reverts, and with deep earnestness I long
To be with Thee amid the untold bliss,
 The hush'd silence of the angel-throng.

XLVI.

“Doubtless Thou art our Father.” ISAIAH lxiii, 16.

ALL, all is dark, for I have sinned, and Thou
 Hidest Thy face ;
I mourn, and droop my hot and burning brow,
 Pining to trace
'Mid the thick darkness glooming round me now
 Thy smile of grace.

And yet ;—though for his child's sad naughtiness
 And wilful ways,
The father may the words of love repress
 Of happier days,

And turn away when he his old caress

Shyly essays.

Still keep his eyes their everlasting watch

Most anxiously,

His stretched out arms the thoughtless wanderer
snatch,

As he runs by

Some precipice or stream, perchance to catch

A butterfly.

E'en so I feel Thy guarding arms enfold

Now as before,

I still can trust Thee, though Thou dost withhold

Aught token more

Of the deep love,—the tenderness untold

Of Thy heart's core.

Yet Father, I am desolate ; O turn
On Him Thine eyes
Who for me in the garden by the burn
Did agonize,
And, interceding, even now doth yearn
In Thy far skies.

And then look on me ; O my God, the smile
Will surely come
Back to Thy face, and I, the same glad while
As to my home,
Will nestle on Thy breast, in sad exile
No more to roam.

XLVII.

“Peace I leave with you ; my peace I give unto you ; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” JOHN xiv, 27.

WE thank Thee, O Lord Christ,
For Thy last parting gift ;—the perfect peace
Whose depth and sweetness the dark, troubled world
Can understand not ;—the unbroken rest
Thou givest to the weary ones who fling
Their burdens down at Thy most blessed feet.

E'en as a broad, deep lake,
Above which rages the wild, rushing storm,
And whose top-waves rock wildly to and fro
An hour or two, but in whose far, low depths
The waters are so still, that the small shells
Are moved not on the white, moist, weedy sand.

Such is Thy peace—the rest
Our souls rejoice in : for a little while,
When sorrow's whirlwind rushes down amain,
Or the world's hurricane sweeps fiercely o'er,
The surface may be ruffled, but below
Are crystal stillness, brightness, blessedness.

And Thou wilt very soon,
As on the deep blue sea of Galilee,
Say to all storms of earth, "Peace : be ye still !"
And our soul's azure waters shall no more
Be even crisped by lightest wandering wind,
Blowing down coolly from the mountain-heights :

But clear and calm for aye
Will mirror but Thy holy, peaceful face
Shining down calmly from amid the trees
Of life which line the pathway to the throne,
Whereof the splendid glory will imbue
Heaven's atmosphere with radiant, golden light.

XLVIII.

“Fear not; I am the First and the Last; I am He that liveth
and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore;
Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”

REVELATION i, 17, 18

AND Thou hast died? Ah me!

I who have suffered at the thought of death,

Imagining the slow and painful breath,

The “cutting off,” as buried Psalmist saith,

The dying agony,

Feel strong and brave what time I calmly think,

How Thou, too, stoodest on the death-stream’s brink,

From Thee too life was cut off link by link

Roughly, distressingly.

Thou livest, and my eyes
Exultantly turn to yon distant blue,
The thin clouds wandering slowly, whitely, through
Shutting out ever and anon from view

Thy path within the skies.
My spirit will find out the glorious road,
And, following where my Lord and Master trod,
Mount up unto the dwelling-place of God
Undarkened by earth-sighs.

Thou hast Death's iron keys,
And when Thy hand will open wide the gate,
And I see nothing but an entrance strait,
And thick, deep darkness for my coming wait

With its strange mysteries,
I shall not fear, but put my hand in Thine,
And so pass through the gloom until the shine
Of heaven's rich brightness, clear and crystalline,
Lighten the passages.

O Thou the First and Last !—

The Last on whom my dying thoughts will rest,

The First I shall behold when I am blest

With the deep joy and gladness unexpressed

After the conflict past !

Immanuel ! Redeemer ! Lord and King !

Closer and closer unto Thee I cling,

And my full heart's adoring praises bring

Before Thy feet to cast !

XLIX.

“Weil ihr denn Kinder seid, hat Gott gesandt den Geist seines
Sohnes in eure Herzen der schreiet, Abba, lieber
Vater.” GALATIANS iv, 6.

O BLESSED Spirit of God's Son the Holy,
Who, entering within the simple spirit,
Teachest us evermore to pray : descending,
Abide within my heart, that I may alway
Go unto God with love free and confiding,
Crying in childlike tones :—“ Abba, dear Father !”

I know not how to pray ; words often fail me,
And I in hushēd silence kneel me lowly ;
Help then with Thy strong, earnest intercessions,
My heart's deep longings perfectly revealing,
That God may look within Thy mind, beholding
My wants when I but say :—" Abba, dear, Father !"

Come Thou in sorrow when my heart is aching,
Sweet Comforter, and make me to draw nearer
To God's own heart of love, so deep, so tender,
My anguish in the few, dear words unveiling
Wherewith Thou ever causest us to venture ;—
Hear me for Thy love's sake :—" Abba, dear Father !"

And as in happy hours of joy and gladness
A little child sits to itself low singing
The name of, " Mother ! mother ! dear, dear mother !"
The while it smiles a smile of sweet contentment ;
So let me thus in joy be aye repeating
The words of tenderness :—" Abba, dear Father !"

O blessed Spirit of God's Son the Holy,
Abide within my heart now and for ever,
That I may know the rich and full communion
God holds with man, the dying and the sinful,
Suffering him evermore to come low crying
In joy as well as grief :—" Abba, dear Father !"

L.

“We wait for Thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of
Thy temple.” PSALM xlviii, 10. (*Prayer Book version.*)

For Thy loving-kindness, Lord,
Wait I now ;
Unto me Thy grace accord,
While I bow,
With Thy people calm and lowly,
In Thy temple-courts the holy,
Uttering with fervour slowly
Hymn and vow.

Thou with all Thy saints of old
Oft didst meet,
While the altar-smoke unrolled
Heaven did greet,
While the white-fleeced lambs were dying,
And the High-Priest deeply sighing
Sprinkled all the gold o'er-lying
Mercy seat.

Low in dust that Temple lies
Stone by stone,
Ended is each sacrifice ;—
One alone,
Priest and Victim, Heaven's throne filling
Pleads for us, our soul fears stilling,
All our thoughts with rapture thrilling
With love's tone.

Yet wherever two or three

Meet to pray,

Is His temple, there doth He

Come alway ;

And His people ever waiting,

And His great love celebrating,

Feel His loving-kindness sating

Them for aye.

Father ! give me now to see

Even here,

Something of the mystery

True and dear,

Of Thy heart of tendernesses,

Which the worn and sinful blesses,

Showering down soft, sweet caresses

Us to cheer.

Saviour ! while I wait, do Thou

Touch my eyes,

Let me see Thy glory now

Ere I rise ;

Let me know the love that brought Thee

Down from blessedness ; that sought me

While I wandered ; and then bought me

With death-sighs.

Comforter ! I plead with Thee ;—

Come and dwell

In my heart most tenderly,

And dispel

All the coldness of my feeling ;

Unto me *His* love revealing ;

Me unto *His* coming sealing

Sure and well.



Tri-Une God, to Thee I turn

Waitingly,

Deep within my heart doth yearn

After Thee ;

While the prayer-tones are ascending,

While the hymn-notes are soft blending,

From Thy Throne of Glory bending,

Shine on me !

LI.

“Finally we thank Thee for all those, whether we have known them on earth, or whether they were strangers to us, who have departed this life in Thy faith and fear; and who are safe and at rest till the day of Thy coming.” DR. ARNOLD.

WE come with grateful praises, and thought grows
 Unfolding as a rose ;
The evening twilight slowly dies away
 Yielding to night's dim sway,
And our thanksgivings cease not ; one by one
 Each distant shining sun,
By us named stars, comes forth, and evermore
 Our souls in deeper thankfulness adore.

Yet endingly we say : " O Father, we,
 Joyously, fervently,
Bless Thee for all who in Thy faith and fear
 Have left this earthly sphere,
And rest now in the bosom of Thy love
 In yonder world above,
Studding our sky as those fair orbs of light
 The spaces awful far and infinite."

" O Father, earth is very dark, but they
 Went on their quiet way,
Feeling Thy hand e'en when they could not see
 Its mystic guidancy ;
They heard earth's music, but turned not aside
 To list its tone of pride,
But evermore their solemn vigils kept
 Until in death they laid them down and slept."

We hush our voices hearing angel-wings,
And holy memory brings
Faces before us, fair, and sweet, and pale,—
Forms exquisitely frail,—
The past yet unforgotten music of low words
Soft as a singing-bird's ;—
And the thanksgiving almost dies in tears
Roused by the thoughts of recollected years.

Anon we speak : “ We joy that they are blest ;—
That Death's dread, awful test
For them is over ;”—that they “ walk in white
With Thee in glory-light ;—
We thank Thee for them all ;—the little child
Who yesterday but smiled ;—
The martyr of the bloody times who past
Unto his home borne by a fiery blast.”


Each hour Heaven richer grows ; each hour we raise
 A deeper song of praise ;
From east and west, from north and south, they come
 Gathering within their home ;
Songs on all lips ; on all heads endless joy ;
 Deep peace without alloy,
The time draws near ; THOU shalt be satisfied,
 O Love, who for man's rescuing hast died !

LII.

“That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” 2 CORINTHIANS iv, 11.

FROM the low root beneath the dark mould hidden,
The soft green shoots sprang quickly day and night ;
And, as by some strong impulse hourly bidden,
Leaves burst to light.

And little crimson bells from buds unfolding
Rang to the hissing wind a fairy chime,
And streams of incense rose,—no heart withholding,
Through morning's prime.



Then thought grew quick,—quick as the rich life
swelling

Down to the tips of spray, and bud, and flower,
And fancies in a fountain-column welling
Dropt as a shower.

Thinking of Thee, O Root unseen, yet sending
For evermore fresh tokens of Thy life,
Unceasingly upspringing in the blending
Of peace with strife.

Soft clustered blooms of gentle heart returnings,
Rich, ever-opening bells of joy and love,
Green leaves of hope, long, twining, tendril-yearnings
For home above.

Withdrawing then my hand which had been feeling
The dewy coolness of each crimson flower,
I turned to Him, the inmost thought revealing
Of that bright hour :

Thus praying ; through this day, Thou sole Life-
giver,

O manifest Thy hidden life in me,
That each breeze as it crosses yonder river
Most tremblingly,

May bear a waft of fragrance faint and tender,
Thine own returned to Thee in gratefulness,
Until Thy face with its strange veilless splendour
My vision bless.

LIII.

“I am my Beloved’s, and His desire is towards me.”

SONG OF SOLOMON vii, 10.

“THOU art mine,” the Saviour crieth,

“I am Thine,” my heart replieth,

Oneness claiming ;

And the low words softly sinking

Into silence of glad thinking,

Leave a sense of music-linking

Past earth’s naming.

Through the stillness calm and holy
Rise again the old tones lowly,
Scarcely making
On the thought which, dove-like nesting,
On those other words was resting,—
Words to soothe the aye molesting
Spirit-aching.

And my lips with gladsome smiling
Echo the sweet tones beguiling
Earthly sorrow ;—
“ His desire is to me turning
With its ceaseless watchful yearning ;
Haste to come ; my heart is burning
For heaven’s morrow.

“ Yet until the dewy splendour
Of the dawn-star fair and tender

Crest yon ranges,
 Let me hear Thy voice of sweetness,
 Hushing all earth's incompleteness,
 Fitting with its perfect meetness
 All earth's changes.


"Then come, fleet as roe of forest,
 Soothe the grief when at its sorest,
 Me up taking ;
 To Thy lilied garden leading ;
 In Thy budding meadows feeding ;—
 From Thy crystal stream my needing
 Thirst enslaking."

LIV.

“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.”

HEBREWS xiii, 8.

As through the drifting clouds
Now and anon we catch a glimpse of blue,
And know, though darkness shrouds,
Marring oft-times our vision's piercing through,
That azure light still glows
With its soft radiance and its calm repose :



So we,—who now but see
Some passing glimpses of Thy love divine
 Athwart life's mystery,
What time Sabbatic splendours round us shine,
 Or night's still holy glooms
Hide with their shadows earth's rich flowering
 blooms :—

Feel,—though clouds intervene,
Though oft our eyes grow dim through blinding tears,
 Though, oftener still, between
Thy love and us rise up our earth-full years,
 Our unremembering hours,
Our passionate world-love's wild awful powers,—

Thou art the same for aye ;
For evermore Thy heart of love still yearns
 Above us in the way ;
For evermore Thine eye of love still turns

Upon us as we weep,
Or thoughtlessly our hearts in pleasure steep.

Yet, even as we long
For the departing of the cloudy drifts,
For winds most swift and strong
To rend the hanging veil with gladsome rifts,
And let the sunshine through,
And all the joyance of the summer blue :

So pray we ;—let Thy wind,
E'en though it be most strong, arise and blow,
Until the clouds that blind
Our onward vision, breaking, downward flow,
That thus we aye may see
With "open face" Thy love's firm constancy.

LV.

“Follow thou me.” MATTHEW ix, 9.

“FOLLOW thou me :” He said, and passed Him on

Within the veil ;

I seeing that my Joy, my Hope was gone,

Felt my heart fail ;

Yet rose up straight, His voice within my ear

As distant music faint yet sweet and clear.

And while I groped along with swimming eyes,

Tired, lingering feet,

Oft glancing to the far blue starry skies,

In haste to greet

Some token of the rift which will unfold

What time the years of absent love are told ;

I saw a footprint with a bloody stain

Brightening the day,

Another—yet another—and again

Others still lay

Most freshly on the grass. His ! His ! I knew

The path He traced upon the morning dew.

And eagerly I coveted to put

My feet within

The dear red impress of each blessed foot,

And so to win

Some dim resemblance incomplete, yet fair,

Before His welcome thrills the silent air.

Since then—ah me !—the lily borders white

Aye and anon,

Have wiled away my heart with the rich light

Which on them shone,

And I have missed His footprints, passing o'er

With weak steps faltering onward evermore.

And yet, this morn, a waft came by and brought,

Most lovingly,

The uttered music of His yearning thought,

“ Follow thou me !”

And my heart answered; “ Draw me; I will run

Until the setting hour of life's bright sun.”

LVI.

“ My God shall supply all your need according to His riches
in glory in Christ Jesus.” PHILIPPIANS iv, 19.

I SAID one dreary morn; my need
Is very sore,
My head and heart have both agreed
To want still more
Than God has unto them decreed,
From out his store.

And while this saddened thought thus pressed

Upon my brain,

And every fibred-cell distressed

With throbbing pain,

And I with heavy sighs confessed

The iron chain :

God's answering voice stole softly down

With solace fraught:—

“I will supply all need, and crown

Each wishful thought;

No sob my music shall not drown

Can e'er be caught.

“No call responseless in my skies

Wanders away;

No tendril on the pathway lies

Without a stay;

No want without its full supplies

Blessing for aye.”

And while He spoke I felt my need

Grow satisfied;

I saw across the sky's blue mead

Some white clouds glide,

My heart went with still quicker speed

God's throne beside.

SONNETS.

“I should lie as in His bosom, but may the
murmurs of gratitude that may escape my
weak lips there, make an echo in many a
devout soul.” R. A. VAUGHAN.

Sonnets.

I.

“FEAR not.” ISAIAH xliii, 1.

“FEAR not :” and fear grew quiet as a child

Lulled into deep and calm and dreamless rest,

And looking up,—my weary spirit blest,—

I gazed upon Christ’s leaning face, and smiled,

Seeing therein the Father reconciled,

And all the tenderness and love expressed

For which my soul had yearned with ceaseless

quest,

While wandering far and lone upon the wild.

And since then, evermore, night after night,
Amid the darkness these blest words I hear,
Shedding around a strange and solemn light,
Hushing the feeble stillness of dark Fear ;—
I could shake hands with Death without affright,
The music of that “Fear not !” in my ear.

II.

“I have redeemed thee.” ISAIAH xliii, 1.

“I HAVE redeemed thee :” thus His voice went on
In softest murmurs, and each wound-mark’s trace
On feet, and hands, and side, and blessed face,
With crimson glory flushing out-shone ;
And I thought of the hours of conflict gone,
The agony within the garden space,
The mockings of the jeering populace,
The lifted cross, the long and bitter moan
When God awhile withdrew, and the last cry
Telling that all was over,—the full price
Paid down for evermore. Then, swift to dry
The starting tear, I saw before me rise
The opened tomb, and, lessening up the sky,
The Victor entering lost Paradise.

III.

“Thou art mine.” ISAIAH xliii, 1.

ANON He spoke, crowning His tenderness,
Brimming the fulness of His love divine,
With these sweet tones of comfort, “Thou art
mine !”

And, listening to His favour’s great excess,
I felt strange depths of joy my spirit bless,
And smilingly my lips did aye entwine
Such words :—now Thou art mine and I am Thine,
And nought shall sever me from Thee : distress
Shall only bring Thee nearer ; joy shall make
The cord of love still brighter ; Thou shalt hide
My head upon Thy breast, if for Thy sake
My feeble spirit with reproach be tried ;
Yea, Death himself my passive hand shall take,
And lead me like a child to Thy dear side.

IV.

"I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."

LUKE xxii, 32.

I SAT in silence musing dreamily

On coming joys and sorrows, days and years,

And sunny hopes blent with dim twilight fears,

When gently, lovingly slid down to me

A well known voice of tender melody,

From out the glory of the upper spheres ;

I listened, and my eyes filled with glad tears :—

"That thy faith fail not I have prayed for thee."

And faith looked up and saw within the veil

The intercessor pleading evermore,

And, flashing on His breast-plate's jewelled mail,

My name close to His loving heart He bore,

And I, though timid, faltering, weak and frail,

Quietly heard Time rippling past Life's shore.

V.

“Neither pray I for these alone.” JOHN xvii, 21.

FOR, through the stillness all about me spread,
Came wafts and snatches of His thrilling prayer :
“Not yet do Thou remove from earthly care,
But in the paths her trembling footsteps tread
Keep pure and stainless :”—“lovingly down shed
The Sanctifier :”—“one with us, that there
Earth may believe :”—“Father, I wilt that where
I am, the spirit from its clay house fled
May come in peace hereafter, to behold
My matchless glory.” And I thought how He,
While standing by a gravestone backward rolled,
Said, looking up, “Thou ever hearest me !”
And, feeling restfulness and joy untold,
My heart uplifted songs of jubilee.

VI.

“ I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness.”

PSALM xvii, 15.

WHEN Thou, with more than mother's tenderness,
Shalt bend above me life's deep sleep to break,
And with a quiet, happy smile I wake,
Feeling the mute yet meaningful caress
Wherewith Thou dost the half awakened bless ;
And, looking up, my eyes the shadow take
Of that dear brow once thorn-crowned for my sake,
Now wreathed with glory tongue may not express,
I shall have that for which I pine in vain,
Rising each morn with sadness undenied ;
For as I gaze again and yet again,
Nestling as bird close to Thy wounded side,
I to Thy perfect likeness shall attain,
And be for evermore quite satisfied.

VII.

"He will rest in His love." ZEPHANIAH iii, 17.

HE in His love will rest ; yea, take delight
In thee with singing. He will fondly fold
Thee in His mantling robe, so that the cold,
Rough blast of earth shall come not near to blight
Thy cheek. Should ought harsh sound affright,
Even before thy fearfulness is told,
His arms shall press thee with a closer hold,
The while thy lips did part with smile most bright :
God, our Creator ! is Thy love so deep,
So utterly incomprehensible ?—
I, like a loved yet sinning child, would weep
Upon Thy breast, and my soul's longings tell,
Saying ; " In love do Thou my being steep,
That I much loved and pardoned, may love well."

VIII.

“Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man.”


JOB xxxiii, 29.

WHAT shall I seek for those I love, whereby
They unto Thee may be brought close and near?
Shall it be sorrow?—I shrink back with fear
Even to name it, lest my whispered sign
Meet Thy response from yonder radiant sky.
Joy?—for ofttimes sweet child-eyes soft and clear
Affection’s ministries love-full and dear,
Are leading-strings to Thee, O Love Most High!
I ask not ought, but trustingly implore,
Kneeling down humbly at Thy blessed feet:—
Lead by what way Thou wilt to Heaven’s bright shore,
Send by what messenger Thou seest meet,
Only, for His sake who earth’s sad sins bore,
Give us in bliss before Thy throne to greet!

IX.

“I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and,
as a cloud, thy sins : return unto me.” ISAIAH xliv, 22.

I MOURNED before God's throne, my spirit bowed
With grief so deep I scarcely dared to pray,
Uttering the blessed words erst used alway,—
“Abba, dear Father !” Through the shadowing shroud
Then stole to me a voice, clear but not loud,
Adown the azure slopes, and light of day
Shone round me while I heard Him softly say :—
“Behold, I have out-blotted as a cloud
Thy sins, and all thy dark transgressions I
Have as a thick cloud swept away ; return
Thou unto me.” And I, whose saddest sigh
Had been for such return, felt my heart burn,
And I went back with steps most glad yet shy,
And found God's heart of love above me yearn.



X.

“Peter was grieved.” JOHN xxi, 17.

I COME to Thee, my Saviour. Night is here,
Its silence only broken by the chime
Of distant church-bells, telling holy time
Is onward passing in its swift career ;
And I am sad : I know that Thou art near,
That Thou hast pardoned all past sin and crime,
Hast bidden me with joyous haste to climb
Thy Throne's bright steps and lay down without fear
My weary head upon Thy breast ; yet still
I grieve to think of all my waywardness,
My sad estrangement : tears my eyes o'erfill
What time I feel Thy tender heart-caress,
Knowing that I deserve not the love-thrill
Wherewith Thou dost the pardoned wanderer bless.

XI.

"Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power."

PSALM cx, 3.

CONFORM me to Thy will ; Thy love at last

Has led me thus this earnest prayer to pray,

And I with childlike truthfulness can say,—

The secret feeling of reserve is past :

I am quite willing now. O melt and cast

My mind within Thy mould : I will obey.

Bring thought, and word, and deed, beneath Thy
 sway ;

I will henceforward keep my eyes fixed fast

Upon Thine own, and guide me by their light,

Catching Thy thoughts as they glide slowly through,

Striving each hour to live as in Thy sight,

Each hour all things from Thy stand-point to view,

And so pass on with garments pure and white,

Aye, even unbrushed by earth's glittering dew.

XII.

“Become as little children.” MATTHEW xviii, 3.

GIVE me again the child-soul, for the years
Have dimmed my childhood's sweet confiding love,
And ere I enter Thy bright home above
I must be transformed. I would bring my fears,
My joys and sorrows to Thee. All my tears
I would weep only on Thy breast. Remove
All subtle questionings which strive to prove
What faith alone should hold to, till appears
The full burst of Thy glory. Let me feel
That Thou dost all things well, although to me
A sevenfold darkness may Thy meaning seal
With its strange, awful, thrilling mystery ;
I ask but this :—Thyself to me reveal,
And let me cling with child-like trust to Thee.

XIII.

“Leaning upon her beloved.” SONG OF SOLOMON viii, 5.

I GRIEVE before Thee : ever and anon

I stumbling, fall : strength comes not : day by day

I measure o'er the same sad dreary way

On which my trembling steps had erst-while gone.

Yet she went through the wilderness, upon

Her own beloved leaning, and the stay

Of His strong arm upheld her when there lay

Stones in her path, or flowers before her shone.

O let me too lean on Thee ; fling around

Me Thy supporting arm ; Thy strength be mine ;

So shall I hasten onward o'er the ground

Lying between me and the Hyaline

Fronting Thy Throne, whose waters to the sound

Of angel-music quiver, throb, and shine.

XIV.

“The Lord bestows His blessings there where He findeth the
vessels empty.” THOMAS A’KEMPIS.

EMPTY me of myself, for Thou, O King,
Into all empty vessels pourest grace :
Pride fills my heart so that there is no place
For Thy sweet favour’s loving visiting :
All high thoughts make Thou low ; in mercy bring
All proud imaginations down ; abase
The towering fancies reaching up apace
Higher and higher in their circling spring.
I would be nothing, so that Thou be all ;
I am content to feel my strength quite gone,
If Thou but strengthen me whate’er befall ;
Thine alphabet will I with patience con,
If Thou my wisdom wilt be :—hear my call,
Thy crimson cross, I, clinging, look upon.

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XV.

“The children’s bread.” MATTHEW xv, 26.

FATHER, the Sabbath morn has dawned, and I
Come for Thy blessing. All Thy board is spread,
Heavily laden with Thy children’s bread ;
Give me my portion. I shall pine and die
If Thou withhold it. Smile on me ; my sigh
Will change into a smile, the while I tread,
With gladsome steps, Thy courts oft visited
In vain through sin’s dark, subtle treachery.
Thou art my Father : I am still Thy child ;
And though Thy better children throng around
Receiving baskets full from the up-piled
Table of Thy dear love, and hear the sound
Of Thy sweet voice ;—O Father reconciled,
Pass me not by ; my heart for Thee dost bound.

XVI.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." JAMES V, 16.

PRAY for me, O my friends, for prayer has might ;

It is the slender, hidden, golden clue

Whereby the blessings men and angels view

Come gliding down from realms of love and light.

I sigh and yearn for your sweet prayers to-night,

Deeming that when they rise, from yon deep blue

Grace will descend upon me, as the dew

Now falling in seed-pearls pure, cool, and bright :

My heart is mournful ; one word only thrills

Within its depths ;—"The prayers of righteous men

With God avail much." Its soft music stills

My inner restlessness, I knowing then

That with my prayers your own will climb heaven's
hills,

Beyond the farthest bounds of fancy's ken.


XVII.

“ Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.”

MATTHEW XXVI, 14.

“ WATCH thou and pray, lest thou be overthrown.”

And I, expecting nought but grave reproof,
And keeping of His presence far aloof,
Felt my heart broken by the gentle tone
Wherewith He spoke unto me all alone,
Unheard by those 'neath the same temple-roof :
And I said ; pray Thou too on my behoof
When I come with my sighs for Thee to own ;
And watch Thou over me, the while I watch
With eyes so dim, that oftentimes they fail
Temptation's shy approaches swift to catch ;
Thy prayers with God shall evermore prevail,
Lifting each hour the pearl-gate's golden latch,
While angels pass adown to help the frail.



XVIII.

“A cup of cold water.” MATTHEW x, 42.

I THOUGHT—my soul weighed down with joy's excess,
What can I do for that most reverent friend,
Whose gentleness and love together blend
My spirit in its weariness to bless?—
And, feeling my sad, utter helplessness,
I grieved in silence : then I heard descend
A voice whose melody I long had kened
Aye heightening joy and lessening distress :
It spake of the “cold water cup,” and straight
Thereafter of the “recompense,” and I,
Though wistful turned away, content to wait
The setting of the white throne in the sky,
Knowing that then the joyance would be great,
Each crystal draught rewarded royally.

XIX.

“What wilt Thou that I should do unto Thee?”

LUKE xviii, 41.

WHAT will I? Ah, my God, I will Thy will!

As a young child who told some gift to choose

Looks for a little while lost in a maze,

Then turns unto his father standing still,

Watching the eager eyes, the joyous thrill,

The flushes which his tiny face suffuse,

And, for that each bright thing desire renews

Till longing for them all his spirit fill,

Says, “Choose thou for me; I shall be content,”—

So I,—not knowing what is best to ask,

Since oftentimes good with more ill is blent,

And oftentimes rich blessings wear a mask

Disguising their strange rareness,—lowly bent

Repeat the lesson learned, love's gladsome task.

XX.

"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly."

1 THESS. v, 23.

O SANCTIFY me ! Now into this one
All wishes melt them. I have nought to say
About the sorrowful or pleasant way
Whereby such transformation may be done,
My lips on this are silent : only run
These three words up and down my heart to-day,
The key-note to all prayings when I pray,
Ending them ever as they first begun.
For Thou art holy, and I yearn to be
Even as Thou art. On my brow Thy seal
Stamp Thou most clearly, fully, perfectly,
That in the day Thy sevenfold thunders peal,
And I Thy unveiled face of glory see,
I may by Thee be owned while low I kneel.

XXI.

"I am Thine." PSALM cxix, 94.

AYE, I am Thine, and since that I am Thine
 Make Thou me like Thee. Let me pass along
 Unto the Home of everlasting song.
Bearing Thine image, O Thou Love Divine ;
Walking as Thou didst walk, ringed with the shine
 Of joyous eyes ; encompassed with a throng
 Of music-breathing prayers from those whose wrong,
Or woe has gladdened been by word of mine.
Let Thy love in my eyes, upon my lips
 Pour some of Thy sweet grace. O glorify
Thyself in me. And when Time past me slips,
 And I Thy smile of life and love descry
Beyond the shadow of Death's dark eclipse,
 Like Thee may I, most calmly praying, die.

XXII.


"Ye are the temple of the living God." 2 COR. vi, 16.

SILENTLY rose the temple : iron clang
Echoed not through the courts ; as lily flower
Unfolding whitely in still morning hour,
Unfolded the white glory ; then there rang
A joyous shout,—the gathered people sang,
And God's great splendour with its hushing power
Settled down, wrapping corridor and tower,
The while from Heaven He made His banners hang.—
Make me Thy temple ; silently up-build
Within my heart Thy holy dwelling-place,
And let its deep recesses all be filled
With the rich overflowings of Thy grace ;
My being's chords and discords all are stilled,
Waiting the revelation of Thy Face.

XXIII.

"The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the waters."
REVELATION xxii, 2.

A WIND has been in heaven all through this day,
Ruffling the crystal waters of Life's stream
Which mirror in their depths the pearly gleam
Of the twelve gates which open stand for aye ;
And from the trees of Life, which line the way,
Leaves have come fluttering softly, as a dream,
And fallen upon us on earth ;—we deem
They glitter still with the pure river's spray ;
And I now circled by an eastern night,
And holding near my heart a leaf or two
Dropped down upon me, fresh, and green, and bright,
Pray for thee, O thou sorely tried one, who,
Surrounded by a western sunset's light,
A sufferer, sittest full in God's clear view.



XXIV.

"I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy
to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed
in us." ROMANS viii, 18.

O RECKON nothing of the sufferings
God sends upon thee. Though thy cup of woe
With bitterness its lippéd brim o'erflow,
Still heed it not. Soft, snowy angel-wings
Shall fold thee round at last. Glad saints in rings
Shall circle thee. Pain thou shalt only know
As some dim far-off dream of long ago.
And, as each seraph standing by thee sings,
Thy voice, now tremulous, then strong and clear,
Shall join their hymnings, and the melody
Shall jar not on thy spirit's chords, as here
Earth's joyous music. God shall unto thee
Reveal His light, and Time shall disappear
Before the radiance of Eternity.

XXV.

“My soul cleaveth unto the dust.” PSALM cxix, 25.

SLOPE into night, O day, and let the still
Calm moonlight down. My soul is sad ; the earth
Has overshadowed it : my Father's hearth
Seems not as it was wont, and yet, the chill
Is mine, not His :—yearnings His large heart fill
Over His straying child. Ah me ! for mirth
Most merry is not joy : and barren dearth
May be upon the far, blue, laughing hill.
Come, night, seal up the volume of the week,
Then hasten by, and let the dawn arise
Sabbatic ;—it may be with the first streak
Of amber radiance in the eastern skies,
I shall hear God's rich voice unto me speak,
My heart returning loving child-replies.

XXVI.


"A perpetual covenant." JEREMIAH 1, 5.

I WROTE these words :—"I pledge myself to be
Thine now and evermore : " and straight there fell
A solemn calm upon me, like the spell
He once breathed on the sea of Galilee :
And I went on with the day's ministry,
My own no more, and Love stood sentinel
Beside the gate of my heart's citadel,
With quickest apprehension first to see
Each thought or word befitting not His own,
Yet seeking entrance. Jesus, my soul's king,
Keep ever on my brow the light which shone
In that glad consecration hour. O spring
Of all earth's hidden sweetness ! Fount alone
Of Heaven's deep blessedness, to Thee I cling.

XXVII.

"His banner over me was love." SONG OF SOLOMON ii, 5.

"CANOPY us with Thy love : " and, while we prayed,
God spread His banner over us, and peace
Came settling down with steady, full increase,
Till all our spirit's stormy winds were laid ;
And through the silence thus within us made
His voice stole, as the dew on Gideon's fleece,
And joy-drops from the founts that never cease
Their crystal flowing, earthward to us strayed.
Within my heart the memory of that hour
I placed away, (as oftentimes a leaf,
Or rosebud scarcely opened, or fair flower
Given by some precious hand,) to be in grief
By its encircling spell of hidden power,
God's comforter,—an ear from His great sheaf.



XXVIII.

"He binds all His people, both the dead and the living, in one immortal tie." MADAME GUYON.

THE evening deepened : with it deepened thought ;
And I held converse as the moments fled
With all the living, ay, and with the dead
In Christ. Then, suddenly, my heart grew fraught
With a strange sense of oneness deep inwrought,
And from the joyance of the perfected,
The woe of those on earth by sin bested,
Alternate gleams and shadowings it caught.
Ah ! surely in His love He flings around
His own a chain most subtle, strong, and bright,
Whose golden links can never be unwound
By Time or Death. We ringed with starry night,
They in full blaze of day, are firmly bound
With the same running links of flashing light.

XXIX.

“Without Christ.” EPHESIANS ii, 12.

“WITHOUT Christ !” As I read a fearful sense

Of horror o’er me crept and chilled my heart,

And from its inner depths with sudden start

A cry arose of agony intense :—

“O never leave me in this darkness dense

Away from Thee. Let what else will depart,

So Thou forsake me not. Grief has no smart

If Thou be near with Thy sweet influence

Most comforting. And Joy can claim no right

To that blest name if it spring not from Thee,

Source of all gladness, happiness, and light.

Let me not lose Thee on Life’s raging sea ;

Keep in Thine own my feeble hand grasped tight,

Till heaven’s eternal safety foldeth me !”

XXX.

“I will not fail thee nor forsake thee.” JOSHUA i, 5.

THUS prayed I, and the answer straightway came :—

“Fear not, I will not fail thee nor forsake !”

And I felt Him my trembling hand up take
Within His own, and through my very frame
Then shot a warmth, as from an hearth-fire's flame
What time snow-flake falls quickly on snow-flake,
And, while I closely nestled near, He spake
Calling me by my own familiar name :
And I grew calm and quiet, as a child
Who cradled on his mother's bosom lies,
And on her face of love serene and mild
Gazes most fondly with large dreamy eyes,
Then falls asleep with the last smile she smiled
Shadowed on his rose-lips in fairest guise.

XXXI.

"Thy name is as ointment poured forth."

SONG OF SOLOMON i, 5.

AND resting in His tender love I said :—

"Lord, my Redeemer, who my soul hast won

From him by whom it well nigh was undone,

Thy name is unto me as ointment shed

In rich abundance round and overhead."

And I went over softly one by one

Each precious title: "Morning Star:" "Bright Sun

Of Righteousness:" "Sin-bearing Lamb:" "Life's

Bread:"

"Great High Priest:" "Sympathizing Brother:"

"Friend

Still closer than a brother:" and then all

Reaching a climax, found a glorious end,—

"Jesus, my Saviour." And with feathery fall

A mystic silentness drooped down: I kenned

Therein His love-response to my soul's call.

XXXII.

“My soul wait thou *only* upon God.” PSALM lxii, 5.

O FRIENDS ! O friends ! my passionate heart out-cries

Unto you. I feel very sad and weak ;

I should be strengthened could I hear you speak,
And look far down the depths of your kind eyes.—

I stilled my longings, hearing God’s replies,

Not man’s, to my vain yearnings :—“Wherefore
seek

Strength save from me alone ? The brightest-streak
Of crimson light along the eastern skies
Is not the day.” My pale cheeks throbbing burned

At His reproof though said in softest tone ;
But as to meet my Father’s face I turned,
I found His clasping arms around me thrown,
And telling Him my trouble, I discerned

A warm flush redden all the emerald zone.

XXXIII.

“The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Cor. xiii, 14.

SOFTLY the blessing dropped, and as each word
Broke up the sudden silence after prayer,
There seemed a solemn movement in the air,
As if the wings of listening angels stirred
Their snowy silvery plumage, while they heard
God's benediction. And to soothe earth's care
Christ's loving “grace” sank down most richly
where
Hearts seem the saddest, redly stung and spurred
By agony. And white lips meekly said :—
“O Christ, if thy sweet favour evermore
Abide with us, we shall not shrink with dread
Back from the grief-cup, for its hellebore
Shall lose the poison, and we comforted
Shall drink it, trembling not as heretofore.”

XXXIV.

"And the Love of God." 2 Cor. xiii, 14.

THEN "God's love" filled the spaces, and a glow,
Rich, calm, ethereal, joyance-giving, stole
Within the deep recesses of each soul,
Gladdening far more than violets after snow,
Than after deserts, the cold rippling flow
Of running streams : I hush me : nature's whole,
Even from Arctic to Antarctic pole,
Thereof no broken shadowing can show.
And, wrapped in that warm mantling love, we lay
In quietness most perfect, calm extreme,
As children, who when wearied with their play
Sleep on their mother's bosom, and straight dream
She bends above them, and then wake and stay
Their eyes upon her white brow's holy gleam.

XXXV.

"And the Communion of the Holy Ghost." 2 COR. xiii, 14.

AND the "Communion of the Holy Ghost,"

Rounded the blessing with its perfectness,

And we said :—Lo, we are not comfortless,

Though from our Fatherland's green, palmy coast

Afar our "little ships" are tempest tost :

Soft words aye breathe around us, when the stress

Of wind and wave is greatest : then distress

Amid the grave, sweet melody is lost :

And from athwart the clouds a spot of blue

Opens out slowly, letting fall a light

Clear, calm, and spiritual ; and a cool, bright dew

Lies on the quiet decks all through the night,

And the prows, speeding as with instinct true,

Dash up on either hand the sea-foam white.

XXXVI.

"We know that all things work together for good."

ROMANS viii, 28.

"ALL things shall work for good." I bowed my head
Feeling God's hand upon it, stroking down
My hair caressingly, and strove to frown
The burning tears back which, though yet unshed,
Kept misting oft my eyes. And then I said,
Through gaps which threatened evermore to drown
My words ere they received the meaning's crown:
"I know it ; therefore do Thy will : I dread
Nought with this promise." While I spoke a smile
Made sudden light around me, and my lips
Caught it at once ; it could not but beguile
The lingering pain. And He said : "He ne'er trips
Who holds this truth, but in life's dim exile
Aye sees the sun behind the dark eclipse."

XXXVII.

"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love."

JEREMIAH xxxi, 3.

I WENT me in and out withouten care
And did whate'er I listed. Then He came,
And laid me down, touching my outer frame,
And, all to soothe me, took the vacant chair
Beside me. And the silence of the air
Grew full of meaning till he named my name,
Speaking unto me with the very same
Kind look of love I oft had seen Him wear :
And, wedding into one Eternities,
He said : "Yea, with an everlasting love
Have I loved thee." And, as when o'er the seas,
After long weary winging, the white dove
Found rest on Noah's hand, so I, at ease,
With shut eyes lay at rest watched from above !

XXXVIII.

“Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.” Job x, 12.

“THEY there ; I here.” Then grew I very sad,
Until He said, “And I?” I turned, and He
Stood close beside. As sunlight on the sea,
His smile struck over me and made me glad ;
And, though their hymnings filled my ears, I had
Within my heart a nearer melody,
For He spake to me softly, tenderly,
And when I answered, straight I heard him add
Words of yet further comfort. Ah ! His hand !
I felt its pressure so I could have gone
Most calmly down into the silent land,
Knowing that He would lead across each stone
O’erlying all the graves, until the strand,
Lapped by Life’s crystal waves, before me shone.

XXXIX.

"I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude . . . stood before the Throne." REVELATION vii, 9.

A VISION rose before me. As I went
Hither and thither full of household care,
And household pleasure, too, the voiceful air
Grew hushed around me, and there seemed a rent
Adown the blue veil of the firmament,
And, clad in snow-white robes which swept the stair,
Broad, shining as the sea 'neath sunset's glare,
Before the Throne the ransomed thousands bent.—
But with that glimpse the sudden glory failed,
Leaving my heart uplighted with a sense
Of their deep perfect peace, the unassailed
By lightest shadow. God, their sure defence,
Remembering wherefore He on cross was nailed,
Ringing them with His love alone intense.

XL.

“I have called you friends.” JOHN XV, 15.

WHAT seek'st thou from thy friend? I answered
straight

“Both love and prayer ;—love all my soul to fold
In robe of down, and guard it from the cold
Of the world's winter terrible and great ;
Prayer, lest my feeble feet, with warmth elate,
Should slip adown the pavement ice-o'er-rolled,
My faltering footing strongly to uphold
Until I reach God's golden palace-gate.”
And while I spoke my fancies with a smile,
Dreaming that love and prayer would aye attend
My steps, yet thinking only all the while
Of earthly friendship's holy aim and end,
The voice one Sabbath heard on Patmos' isle
Sounded behind me : “Lo, *I* am thy friend?”

XLI.

“Have mercy upon me and hear my prayer.” PSALM iv, 1.

AND I said, while there shot a sudden pain

At thought of my entire forgetfulness :—

I am not worthy ; than Thy least still less ;

Waywardly wilful, as on grassy plain

The set down child, who, once and yet again

Runs from its mother's side. Yet still, O bless

With love and prayer. Aye let Thy love's caress

Shelter me from this rough world's pelting rain ;

And let Thy prayer uphold me hour by hour


Strengthening my feebleness. I am too weak

Too weak too frail e'en like a fragile flower

Which but one autumn blast most cold and bleak

Levels down suddenly. I have no power

Unless Thou for me in God's presence speak.



XLII.


"I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint by the way." MATTHEW XV, 32.

SEND me not fasting hence, lest in the way
I faint most suddenly, and so fall down,
And miss at last the fair and radiant crown
Bought by Thy blood, and kept for the great day.
I have been hungering long, and, weak, I stay
Mine eyes upon Thee. Thou dost never frown
Even Thy feeblest from Thee, though sighs drown
The utterances of the prayers they pray.
Deal gently with me : wearily I droop
My head, yet still press closer to Thy feet ;
Above me in Thy pitifulness stoop,
And let me hear Thy voice most low and sweet,
E'en though 'mid Thy love-celebrating group
Thou might'st most justly passing leave my seat.

XLIII.

"When Jesus therefore saw . . . the disciple standing by whom He loved." JOHN xix, 26.

God changes all our thoughts. I who once said,
"John's place was sweetest," say it yet again
But with a difference. O Thou Holy Slain,
Feeling sin's weight upon my trembling head,
No place seems half so safe, so free from dread
As Thy dear cross, dark with the crimson stain
Of that atoning blood whose precious rain
Laid softly God's wrath flaming fierce and red.
I stand beside it with my arms around
Clasping it strainingly. Let Thy kind eyes
Once dim with agony,—Thy voice whose sound
Was sadder far than all earth's gathered sights,
Look and speak life and pardon, so that crowned,
I may for Thy sake enter Paradise.



XLIV.

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord
Jesus Christ." GALATIANS vi, 14.

RESTING my weary head against the tree

Whereon, O Christ, Thou suffered'st, slowly I

Repeat my oft-said promise :—By the cry

Wherewith passed off Thy solemn agony,

Leaving the barrier down, the pathway free

Up to the central glory of the sky,

I, lifting joy's weight with a joyous sigh,

Resign without reserve this life to Thee.

Do with it what Thou wilt ; I am not mine

Since Thou hast bought me with the precious price

Of Thine own precious blood. Henceforth I'll twine

Around Thy cross the blossoms which arise

So thickly round my feet, though pale their shine,

And faint the fragrance each hid heart supplies.

XLV.

“Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white.” REVELATION iii, 4.

O KEEP me undefiled ! It is so hard
To pluck Thy blossoms, and yet miss the dust
Of the world's meadow-lands, and, still, I must
Preserve my robes quite white, or be out-barred,
What time Thy ransomed meeting their reward
Enter the glorious city of the just,
And the closed gates upon their hinges rust,
For ever shaking out earth's soiled and marred.
And I would “walk in white” with Thee, for Thou
Art to me All in All. I care for nought
If I but feel Thy hand upon my brow ;—
Thy love can fill and satisfy my thought
Though only dimly seen and half felt now,
Through the thick veil by earthly darkness wrought.

XLVI.

"I will . . . make them rejoice from their sorrow."

JEREMIAH xxxi, 13.

I FELT most sad and weary, and it seemed
As if He drew me closer to His breast,
And laid thereon my drooping head to rest,
Till weariness grew sweet, and sadness gleamed
With moonlight radiance. I then, who had deemed
A sorrow nigh me stood, in sables drest,
Looked up, but could see nought : the smile imprest
Upon His lips such sudden splendour streamed
As blinded quite my eyes to all beside ;
And closing them I nestled still more near,
Saying so calmly : Let me but abide
In this sure hiding-place : I shall not fear
The darkest anguish which may e'er betide,
The bitter dropping failing every tear.

XLVII.

“What meaneth then this bleating which I hear.”

1 SAMUEL xv, 14.

“I AM content, O God ! content” And He
Took up my word, and said : “What meaneth then
This sighing that I daily, nightly, hear ?” As when
A door thrown open wide most suddenly
Lets in the sunshine, giving us to see
The face and look of all the waiting men,
Some—it may be—we do not care to ken,
Uttering with them the soft, uniting “we ;”—
So, with God’s question in my ears, a light
Broke in upon me, and I saw a crowd
Of hushed yet present thoughts, which stood upright,
In attitude defiant, cold and proud,
And startled by the unexpected sight,
My head in prayerful grieving low I bowed.

XLVIII.

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee." NUMBERS vi, 24.

INSCRIBED TO MY FRIEND H. C. M.


"FAIR crescent," to myself I softly said,
"Who silverest the violet of the seas
This even, while the cool, caressing breeze
Breathes kissingly upon one thoughtful head."—
My heart still weary and disquieted
Tried yet again :—"star trembling through yon trees,
Eyes full of true and loving sympathies
Have frequent looks to your mild lustre sped."
Unsatisfied with moon and star, my thought
Changed straightway, melting into earnest prayer :
"God have thee in His holy keeping ;—nought
Shall shadow then that brow so calm and fair."
My lips, not dry from parting kisses, caught
The smile in converse they were wont to wear.

XLIX.

“Like as a father pitieth His children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.” PSALM ciii, 13.

I SAID one night when sleeplessly I lay,
Too weary even for still, prayerful thought,—
“Pity my weakness, O my God! *He* caught
The trembler’s hand when all around the spray
Dashed fearfully, and filled him with dismay.”

God answered: “As a father’s heart full-fraught
Pities his infant terrified by nought,
Or wearied with an hour of merry play,
So pity I my children.” Then a calm
Deep quietness stole on me, and I slept
As a child might, who in his father’s palm
Feels all night long his little fingers crept;
And even through my sleep this holy psalm
Made music round me while I closer kept.



L.

"In every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."

PHILIPPIANS iv, 6.

ALL interests as father. If his child
Tell of a broken toy ;—a bird, long fed
By him at morn and eve, at length far fled ;—
A nest found in the centre of a wild
Secluded bush ;—an opening bud which smiled
That dawn upon him in his own flower-bed ;—
A play fellow who in his anger said
Some thoughtless words, yet soon grew reconciled :—
He listens, sharing in his glee or woe
Till the child-heart most fully satisfied
Rests fondly on his tender love.—And so,
O my dear Father, drawing near Thy side,
I tell Thee all, and feel Thou carest, though
My joys and sorrows from Thee are so wide.

LI.

“Seine Linke liegt unter meinem Haupt, und seine Rechte
herzet mich.” SONG OF SOLOMON ii, 6.

NEARER and nearer to Thee ! With the light
Of each new day I feel Thy clasping arm
Drawing me closer, so that safe and warm,
And guarded from all blasts however slight,
I say : “ His left hand holds my head ; His right
Presses me to His heart.” O blessed charm
Of that dear pressure ! Doubt, distress, alarm,
Vanishing leave my spirit very bright,
And filled up only with the peace which knows
No understanding, and the joy which is
Unspeakable and glory-full. I close
My eyes in rich excess of present bliss,
Sighing one wish ;—Aye let me here repose,
Till death puts me to sleep with his cold kiss.

LII.

"Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our
Lord Jesus Christ." 1 CORINTHIANS XV, 57.

I THOUGHT: "'Tis hard to die," and, "happy those,
God's blessed angels, who can never say,
'Grave-night will erewhile round our glorious day'"
But soon my changing thought found fitting close :
"I thank Thee, Lord, that when from Life's rich rose,
Thou, with Thy hands all bleeding, plucked'st away
The thorns, didst suffer yet this one to stay
And prick our fingers 'mid the crimson glows."
Aye, blessed are God's angels in yon skies,
But happier we, who in confiding love,
Though darkness shroud us, can fast close our eyes,
And lie down in our graves, till from above
His voice most soft and tender, bid us rise
And into His unfading realms remove.

• LIII.

“A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.”

PSALM li, 17.

O BREAK my heart ! Sure never petted child
Lulled nightly to its rest on mother's knees,
Meets with caresses half so sweet as these
Wherewith Thou gifest me, O reconciled,
Much-loving Father ! And I sin-defiled,
Knowing how often I Thy love displease
With wilfulnesses changeful as the breeze,
And varying moods, now calm, now very wild,
In quick succession, pray Thee for this grace,
That I with spirit contrite and subdued,
And eyes fixed steadfastly upon Thy face,
Yet oftentimes with tears of love bedewed,
May nestle on Thy breast,—my wonted place,—
Aye and anon murmuring my gratitude.

LIV.

"He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner
over me was love." SONG OF SOLOMON ii, 4


"DRAW me;" I prayed; and straight he took my hand
And led me to His house of banquet, where
His tender love breathed round me, as spring air
Most sweet and warm upon a wintry strand;
And all the roof most gorgeously was spanned
With His divinest rainbow rich and rare;
The pavement of His fond and loving care
Lay 'neath my footing curiously out-planned.
And, that no fear might linger, with His arm
He drew me to Him, laying down my head
Upon His breast, where pillowed soft and warm,
My weary soul I, hushing, quieted,
Knowing no slightest shadowing of harm,
Could ever venture nigh with stealthiest tread.

LV.

"Set me as a seal upon Thine heart, as a seal upon Thine arm; for love is strong as death."

SONG OF SOLOMON viii, 6.

AND by that blissful quiet folded round
I lay in silence, till a sudden thought
With firm strong hold my inmost fancy caught,
And as with iron fetters, coldly bound ;
And tremblingly I said : Thou who hast found
My heart erewhile with vanities distraught,
And it unto Thy bosom's shelter brought.
And in Thine arms of love securely wound,
Forget me never. Set me as a seal
Upon Thine arm ; nay, rather, on Thy heart,
For love is very jealous ; it would feel
All pangs of death ere for one moment part
With Thy dear presence. O to me reveal
The fulness of Thy love to cure earth's smart.



LVI.

“Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.” ISAIAH xlix, 15.

AND thus He spoke : “Fond mother-love may fail,

The little babe unheeded cry and fret,

Yet never, never will I thee forget,

On sunny mountain or in dusky vale.

Thou shalt not fear earth’s wildest, gustiest gale,

For I thy name upon my palms have set,

And, as an ever-murmuring rivulet,

My pleadings rise for thee, O weak and frail,

And therefore cared for momentarily.” And I,

Falling back into quietness and rest,

Thought no more of the future, but with sign

Of deep content clung closer to His breast,

And He from His blue, arching starry sky,

Bending above me softly murmur’d “Blest !”

LVII.

“He hath given me rest by His sorrow, and life by His death.”

BUNYAN.

“REST by His sorrow ; life by His dear death !”

Thus went I singing on this olden strain,
Lingering on each sweet word, and then again
Beginning it anew. As one who saith,
The while he all his treasures numbereth,
“These are the dearer, for that fear and pain
Were his, who from the deep and azure main
Won their soft moonlight drops with close held
breath :”

So rest and life grew dearer for His sake,
Who looking down His love’s unfathomed sea
Sounded its very depths, thence to up take
The radiant gems beyond all price, which we
Had madly flung away, and thus remake
Our broken crown of immortality.

LVIII.

“Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children.”

EPHESIANS v, 1.

I THOUGHT how Faith had been shaped out in dreams :

A strong young man with eyes fixed on yon blue,

And steadfast footsteps firmly pacing through

The world, yet heeding not its glooms and gleams :—

Or (this was sweeter) 'neath the crimson streams

Which blot out earthly guilt from heavenly view,

A very calm and kneeling maiden, who

In clinging to the cross most fearless seems :—

Or, last, a young child holding very tight,

His father's hand, and running close beside,

Although with steps unequal, weak and light,

And tripping sometimes in his heart's gay pride,

And all the while his red lips small and bright

Uttering his fancies quite unterrified.

LIX.

“Have faith in God.” MARK ii, 22.

AND I mused over this last dream most sweet,
 Envyng the little child whose very trips
 Made him cling closelier ; whose moist, rosy lips
Seemed never quiet ; whose small running feet
Hasted on through the long deserted street ;
 Who noted not the hour of dim eclipse
 Because his father held his hand, and slips
And losings of the way could never meet,
That father guiding. And so dreaming on,
 I thought of Faith, the hero ; Faith, the meek
Confiding woman ; yet, aye and anon,
 My fancy turned unto the small and weak
Child by its father. Then God bade me con
 My lesson o'er and o'er with flushing cheek.

LX.

“The love of Christ which passeth knowledge.”

EPHESIANS iii, 17.

THERE was a sadness at my heart, and He
Knowing its bitterness, drew very near
Folding me in His arms, and soft and clear
His voice told through the silence thrillingly
Of “love that passeth knowledge.” Straight from me
I felt the cloudy shadow disappear,
And to its place sent back the coming tear,
While I, reposing on that mystery
Of love ineffable, contented gazed
Upon His even sky’s pale pensive blue,
And murmurously my lips their gladness phrased
In words which still came thronging ever new
And all night long my heart one song upraised :—
“On the bruised reed most freshly falls the dew.”

LXI.

“His great love.” EPHESIANS ii, 4.

Ev'N as the mariner who rowing down
Some shallow sparkling stream feels evermore
His keel grate on the pebbles, and his oar
Tangled by lily leaves, and then a frown
Gathers upon his brow, till past the town,
And past the hill-side drifting, either shore
Fades slowly, and old ocean's hymn and roar
Rising around, the sheep-bell's tinklings drown :
His heart bounds with the waters, and his cheer
Rings out most joyously : so I, whose glee
Had passed away while fathoming the clear
Bright waves of earthly love's felicity,
Lay lulled to rest without a thought or fear
Upon *His* love's unsounded shoreless sea.

LXII.

“A certain woman, . . . when she had heard of Jesus, came
in the press behind, and touched his garment.”

MARK v, 25—27.

NEARER to Thee. Not for John's place I pray,

Though my tired heart would bound at rest so sweet,

Nor e'en for her's, who, sitting at Thy feet,

Caught every precious word which Thou didst say,

And treasured it within her heart for aye :—

Ah no ! ah no ! for I am all unmeet

For such dear converse,—joyance so complete,

And love so perfect casting out dismay.

One stole unto Thee through the press to touch

Thy garment's hem, and, having touched, grew
whole,

And I who feel my weight of sin-woe such

As to weigh down with agony my soul,

Pray thus : even her nearness is for me too much,

Yet let me steal as nigh as once she stole !

Notwich :

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